Week ending December 17 1949

Every Thursday Threepence

John Bull

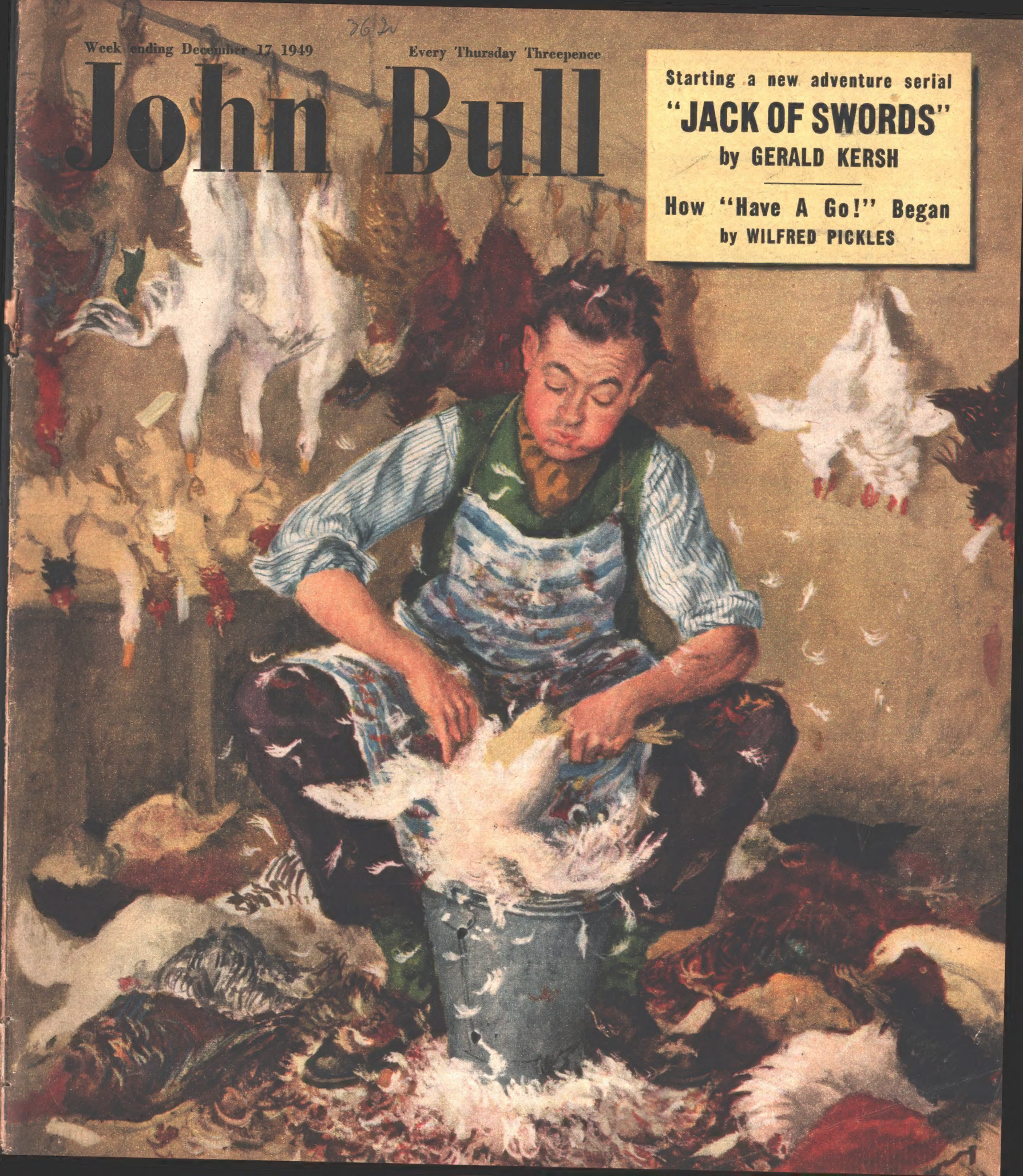
Starting a new adventure serial

"JACK OF SWORDS"

by GERALD KERSH

How "Have A Go!" Began

by WILFRED PICKLES



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- *Expert handling of heavy loads*
- *A complete transport service for everything from drains to roof*

You can build business with the help of British Railways' service. Firms throughout the country are finding that rail transport meets their needs ideally. Your local Goods Agent will gladly explain how YOUR firm can profit by using the Railways

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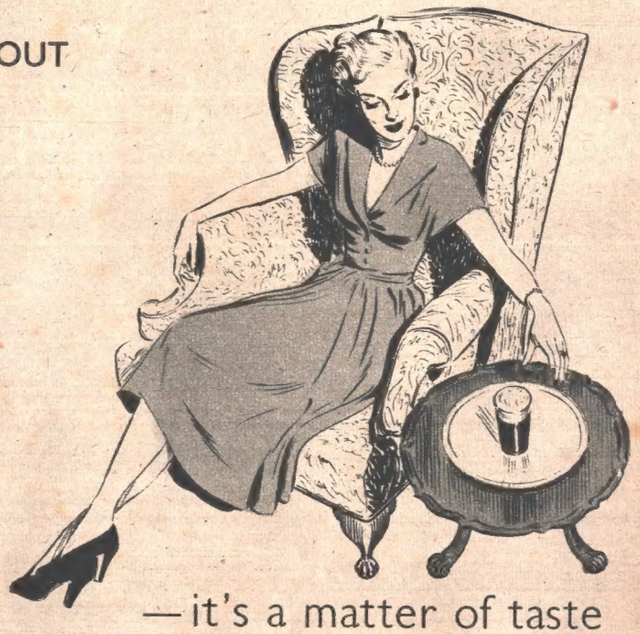
Some people prefer

MACKESON'S

STOUT



—it's a matter of taste

Though most stout is rather bitter, many stout-drinkers find Mackeson's smooth richness a pleasant change, cheering and reviving at the end of a hard day's housework. ***Try it, and taste the difference!***

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Our Famous Wines represent the best value in wine obtainable today, and the name "WHITEWAY" on a label has been a guarantee of purity and quality for over 50 years.

RUBY and WHITE *Per Bott.* **5/9**
Good full bodied wines.

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Excellent for general use.

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Superb flavour and bouquet for all occasions. Extra high strength.

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Full alcoholic strength. Ideal for parties.

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Beautiful extra shine— new natural colour

Shampoo your hair with Gloria today

AMAZING—the difference in your hair after your Gloria shampoo. Here is the secret! This *different* soapless shampoo contains Olestol. Pears Gloria washes hair radiantly clean *without* making it brittle, dry and hard to arrange. Rich-lathering, not sticky, won't cling to hair. Economical, too!

NO WONDER MILLIONS ARE CHANGING TO

Gloria SHAMPOO made by PEARS
(containing OLESTOL*)*

FOZ. 15B/1014

E D I T O R I A L

Why Germany's future is vital to us

SOMETHING IS HAPPENING in Germany which is vital to everyone in Great Britain.

It is the rebirth of a nation—potentially the most powerful nation in Europe. On how that nation is reborn both our peace and our prosperity may depend.

What, then, are the prospects, and how do they compare with "last time"?

After the first World War, Germany was hardly weakened, and she lost only the territory of Alsace and Lorraine which she stole from France in 1870. Russia, in the throes of the Bolshevik revolution and at war on several fronts, was out of the running for European domination.

Rapidly Germany recovered, and behind the unstable democratic government of the Weimar Republic her warlords were planning *Der Tag* all over again. They knew that they had suffered no more than a setback; that Germany, with her vast and energetic population, was sure to bestride Europe again. And we saw what happened.

This time even the Germans know they were beaten. Their country is cut in two, their cities are in ruins and their adult population decimated. Instead of rising again in a Europe which has neither the will nor the strength to hold them down, they find themselves in the front line of the Cold War, and on the prospective battlefield if it ever becomes Hot.

THE world's statesmen are faced with the problem of maintaining a buffer state between the Eastern totalitarian world and the Western democratic world. Some American senators openly advocate restarting the German army, on the grounds that it would be "useful" in an emergency.

Other opinion argues that Germany must be kept disarmed, because, as a nation, she has always abused military power.

Only on one thing are all the Western Powers wholly agreed—and that is that the division of Germany between East and West is likely to continue for some time.

No one expects Russia to retire from the Elbe line, where the Iron Curtain begins its stretch across Europe from the Baltic to the Balkans. Therefore it is the Western German Republic whose destiny we are trying to shape, and which, in return, will be sure to have a considerable say in shaping ours.

If—so the argument runs—we let Germany set herself up again as an armed, strong nation, we shall be saved the expense of occupation and also gain a vital ally against possible Russian aggression. Against this must be set not only the fear that Germany might jump the wrong way, but the gnawing dread of France and the Low Countries that she might one day repeat her aggression on them. And there is reluctance everywhere to re-admit her as a full-scale industrial and commercial competitor.

All the fuss about dismantling of German factories is temporary—it will not affect Germany's strength in the long run. But it is a bad thing for Britain, because most of the factories concerned are in our zone, and we get the odium for what has in fact been agreed between ourselves, the French, the Russians and the Americans.

WHAT matters most is what goes on in the minds of the German people. Have they had enough of Hitlerism and Kaiserism? Are they now ready to settle down and lead civilized lives as part of the great and ancient European family?

On the answer to this, a great deal depends. That is why the new Republican Government and Parliament at Bonn, on the Rhine, are so important.

In spite of early disagreements and difficulties, the outlook is not too bad.

It was only to be expected that the postwar German statesmen should quarrel, pull contrary ways, accuse one another of misdeeds in the Nazi past, and seek to exploit in their struggles the rivalries of their late enemies.

So we need not be surprised or disappointed that Dr. Adenauer, the Chancellor, and Dr. Schumacher, the Social Democrat leader, are battling at Bonn.

Between them they will hammer out the shape of the new Germany, and decide what sort of influence it is to wield in the future counsels of Europe.

For our part, the one thing we can and must prevent is the emergence of a new German state which will only duplicate the very conditions that helped Hitler to seize power and apply the furious energies of the Third Reich solely to preparation for war.

The Germans have deservedly suffered the penalties of defeat, but to prolong their agonies now is to invite the same reaction as in the nineteen-twenties and nineteen-thirties. They must be helped to become self-supporting and to attain at least a reasonable standard of living, with some hope of improvement. This can be done only by integrating their economy with the economy of the rest of Western Europe.

Allied statesmanship must not shrink from this task, nor fail in it, unless we are prepared for consequences that in the long run could even be a good deal worse than "last time."

JOHN BULL 189 HIGH HOLBORN LONDON W.C.1
DECEMBER 17, 1949 VOLUME 86 NUMBER 2268 PHONE: TEMPLE BAR 2468 GRAMS: HEROICALLY, WESTCENT, LONDON

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A cup of delicious 'Ovaltine' at bedtime will help you—as it helps countless thousands—to enjoy the best kind of sleep every night. This deep, restful sleep comes in an entirely natural way, for 'Ovaltine' is prepared only from Nature's finest foods.

The special, soothing nourishment which 'Ovaltine' provides, relieves nervous tension, influences relaxation of body and mind, and quickly prepares the way for sleep. Moreover, that same concentrated, easily digestible nourishment reinforces strength and energy while you sleep.

The Highest possible **Quality** *at the lowest possible price*

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the most widely used Food Beverage

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"White Label"
SCOTCH WHISKY

Och! The THOUGHT of it!

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As fixed by
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And what a thrifty buy! Ounce for ounce, helping for helping, Grape-Nuts give you more for your money!

Twelve-ounce packets only 10½d.

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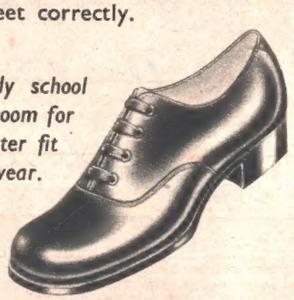
WISE PARENTS INSIST . . . on shoes for boys and girls which are made on Basic Model Lasts to fit growing feet correctly.

These sturdy school shoes give room for growth, better fit and longer wear.



Write for booklet on correct fitting of children's shoes to
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PHILLIPS
JUNIOR BICYCLE OR TRICYCLE FOR
Christmas
The World's finest Christmas present for any youngster. See them at your Dealers. Illustrated catalogue, or booklet "Perfection in Cycling" free on request from J. A. Phillips and Co. Ltd., Credenda Works, Smethwick, Birmingham.

Free Speech

CLEAN UP THE BOMB SITES

AT VERY LITTLE COST, the bomb sites which have been such a useless blot on our cities since the war could be cleared and used as playgrounds for children. Every day you can see children tumbling around on these dangerous dumps. Projecting nails and rusty metal cause many ugly wounds.

It is a national responsibility to give the children somewhere clean to play.—MRS. M. I. HAZELL, 123 Hedge Lane, London, N.13.

Nibbling Assistants

"MUMMY, THEY ARE ALL EATING except us," my small son whispered in the grocer's. And so they were. One assistant was nibbling a piece of cheese, another snapped up half a biscuit, a third popped a peppermint into her mouth. How would it be if the bank clerk pocketed a few half-crowns during the morning's work? He would be equally justified.—MRS. A. W., Wickham, Hants.

Embroidered Cover Kids

FROM ONE OF JOHN BULL'S covers (Douglas L. Mays's painting of the kids' football match, published April 24, 1948), my daughter, aged twenty-one, has completed this embroidery. Is it all

right for it to be entered in competitions or Eisteddfods? — MRS. ELIZABETH A. JONES, Swn-y-Dwr, 6 Douglas Terrace, Bethesda, near Bangor, North Wales.

JOHN BULL gladly gives permission for this clever and original use of a cover design.—EDITOR.

Give Children Excitement

EDWARD HOGARTH'S ARTICLE "Crime Catches Them Young" (JOHN BULL, November 26) missed the most important reason why children turn to crime. So long as policemen see our children across the road, adults interfere as soon as boys start to fight, toys which have a spice of danger in them are banned and school cricket is played with a soft ball, there will be juvenile crime.

Every healthy child needs excitement. Juvenile crime would lessen if we let our youngsters get into some old-fashioned mischief. Better bruises on their bodies than scars on their reputations.—MRS. L. T., Surrey.

. . . When I was a boy and lived in a small Cotswold town, I belonged to the usual gang, ringing door bells, scrumping apples and getting up to other misdemeanours. We never knew when and where a policeman might appear, always armed with a supple cane which he applied quickly and not lightly.

There were no court cases and remand homes and Borstal institutions were not full. One wonders if we have really progressed in the right direction.—SPECIAL CONSTABLE, Gloucestershire.

. . . The article reminded me of the time when I was twelve and played truant from school and was caught by the police. Though I am only eighteen now, I am quite sure there is nothing as effective as a good old-fashioned walloping. — J. EARLE, 46 The Chase, Edgware, Middx.

Letter From Mrs. Gillespie

WOULD YOU BE kind enough to acknowledge all the lovely letters and gifts I have received from your readers.

I am answering each one sent to me individually, but it will take me quite a long time. So, in the meanwhile, I would like them all to know how much their thoughts and prayers have cheered me. And some of the nicest letters were, of course, anonymous.

My general health is better—and I am sure they will all be pleased to know it.—MARJORIE GILLESPIE, 148 Mansfield Road, Alfreton, Derbyshire.

Mrs. Gillespie, author of the article "I've Cancer — and I Cherish Every Hour" (JOHN BULL, October 15) has moved from London to Derbyshire since she wrote her article.

Invitation To Crooks

HOUSEWIVES OFTEN LEAVE an invitation to undesirables to enter their homes and help themselves. As an insurance agent, I often come across notices such as, "No bread. Away for the day. Back at six." Even, sometimes, "Away till Monday. Laundry money on kitchen table." What a temptation to any crook!—A. JAMES, 49 Paul Street, Kingsdown, Bristol.

Backstage With Pickles

THANK YOU for Wilfred Pickles's life story. To be given a peep behind the scenes at the B.B.C. and to learn the nervous mannerisms of some of the best-known announcers was enthralling. — MISS MARION HARMAN, 3 Anglesea Road, London, S.E.18.

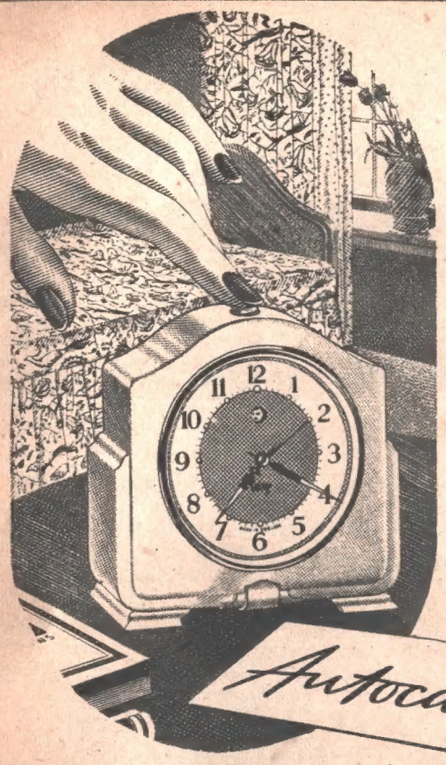
. . . It is plain that Wilfred Pickles has an enormous inferiority complex. He says over and over again how proud he is of his Northern accent and implies that Southerners despise the speech of Northerners. I think they treat them on their merits and are not concerned at all with the length of the "a" vowel.—A. N. BINDER, 215 High Street South, Dunstable, Beds.

Silent City Blitzed

IAN BEVAN'S ARTICLE, "30,000 Silent Cities" (JOHN BULL, November 5) says that no one knows what has happened to the Crimean War cemetery near Sebastopol. My husband, a ship's chaplain, visited the Crimean cemetery at Cathcart's Hill, escorted by Russian officers, in 1947. He found the cemetery blitzed, with its tombstones and monuments shattered.

A peasant woman sitting by the gate told him that the Nazis had strafed the cemetery for two days, killing her parents who had been the caretakers for twelve years. She herself had hidden in a well during the raid and was the sole survivor. —MRS. H. W. MARKS, 18 Longfield Villas, Pomphlett, Plymouth.

John Bull welcomes readers' views, experiences and ideas for publication. A guinea is paid for every letter used. Mark the envelope "Free Speech" and make sure your full name and address is in the letter.



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GINGER WINE

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TUB

SAME QUANTITY QUALITY

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as the familiar tall jar. Also extra-large new-style tub 3/6d Jars and tubes still available 1/11½d. each.

Here's the new-style Brylcreem tub, the perfect pack for the perfect hair dressing. Easy to dip into, easy to grip, it helps you to start the day "right on top" with the double benefit of Brylcreem, the hair preparation that gives you day-long smartness and lasting hair-health.

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THE PERFECT GIFT for any man!

Give him this new Wilkinson Razor for Christmas, with its two blades of finest sword steel, fully hollow-ground. A simple stropping action, and he will find shaving a pleasure. It is an attractive gift, too, in its ivory and black plastic case, complete with strop. And when the time comes to buy new blades, months ahead! he will find Wilkinson Long-Life Hollow Ground Blades most economical, in packet of 4 for 4/11d.—a year's shaving in every packet! Other Wilkinson Razors, from 21/- to 60/- (including Purchase Tax).

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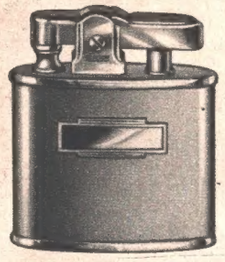
Which of these wonderful RONSON gifts will you get?

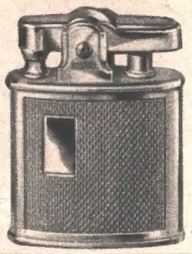
Such quality, such precision, such craftsmanship . . .

There's only one **RONSON**

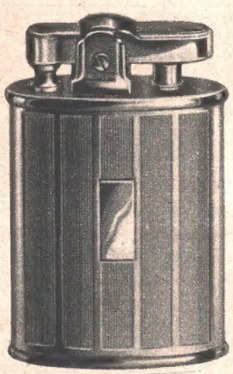
THERE'S *joy* in owning a *Ronson.* For the *Ronson* is a real precision instrument. Giving a *Ronson* shows your good taste. And what a pleasure to receive it! For years and years . . . PRESS, it's lit . . . RELEASE, it's out! Make sure it's really a *Ronson!*



RONSON Standard Butler is a favourite choice among lighters . . . ideal for pocket or bag. Price 38/6



RONSON Princess will capture the heart of the lady in your life. It's dainty enough for the tiniest hand. Price 45/-



RONSON Super Sports . . . the lighter for the he-man. Greater fuel capacity, but pocket-pleasing too! Price 50/-

RONSON Queen Anne table-lighter will add grace and elegance on any table for it is designed as an *objet d'art.* Another table lighter is the Crown. Price each £4.4.0.

The **RONSON** PENCILITER . . . two-in-one, as novel as it's doubly useful. A sleek propelling pencil and a Ronson lighter all in one . . . both in the Ronson tradition of performance and reliability. Price **57/6** including purchase tax.

Give a RONSON WORLD'S GREATEST LIGHTER

GIVE THESE TWO, TOO! Every Ronson wants to please! So don't forget to complete your Ronson gift with odourless, easy-pouring Ronsonol and a packet of *entirely new—extra long* Ronson Firebronze Flints for much longer service.

Avoid imitations—look for the trade mark **RONSON**

The Café d'Antan smelt strong. The babble was like a boiling kettle. He could hear his name spoken: "It's Ratapoil. There's only one Ratapoil"

JACK OF SWORDS

Starting a new adventure serial by GERALD KERSH

SWAGGERING ON THE crown of the road, striding so resolutely that the cobblestones rang under the down-trodden heels of his cracked boots, Major Ratapoil turned into the rue Débâcle and went, like a grenadier on the march, in the direction of the Café d'Antan.

There was determination in his stride, and authority in his stiff neck and compressed mouth. He looked dangerous. He was shabbily genteel, but not in the manner of a sedentary man. He was buttoned to the chin in a tight blue second-hand coat: long gnarled wrists protruded from the cuffs, and three inches of bony ankles were visible under the frayed ends of the buff trousers. All the same, one felt that it was not Ratapoil but only his clothes that were the worse for wear.

A street-vendor, an immense man, pushing a barrow of turnips, shouted: "Get out of the road!"

Major Ratapoil stood still. The wheelbarrow stopped, squeaking, while the man who had been pushing it took his hands off the shafts and rolled them into fists.

"Go away," said Major Ratapoil.

The man started to say something, but then he saw the major's eyes, swallowed a curse, swung his wheelbarrow to the right, and trundled it, rumbling, over the cobbles into the gutter and back into the road.

"*Canaille,*" said Major Ratapoil, pushing his napless hat down over his right eye, and hitching up his coat.

His mind was occupied with more important matters, but a quick, quiet, urgent voice at the back of his mind said: *Why has that wretched beast paused at the corner? Turn quick, Ratapoil.* So he turned, and saw the street-vendor throwing a decayed turnip at him. It flew at his head.

Major Ratapoil instinctively slid his right foot forward, and when the hurtling turnip was at a convenient distance, impaled it with a perfect thrust of his bamboo cane. Then, flicking the vegetable away, he wiped his cane with a dingy red silk handkerchief, and, impelled by force of habit, bowed to the punctured turnip, squared his shoulders, turned on his heel, adjusted his hat, brushed up his moustaches with the back of his left hand, and walked to the door of the Café d'Antan.

He paused on the threshold and fumbled in his pocket for a small silver coin, to reassure himself for the fiftieth time that evening, that he had

Ratapoil, ex-major of Napoleon's army—swashbuckling, devil-may-care Ratapoil—has fallen on evil times. Though his pistols are in pawn, his right arm and sword are still for sale

the price of a bottle of cheap wine. He bought nothing on credit. Sometimes he dreamed that he was in a restaurant, comfortable with wine and food; and when the waiter came with the bill, he put his hand in his pocket and found nothing; this was Ratapoil's nightmare.

Gripping his cane in his right hand and his coin in his left, he pushed the door open with his shoulder and stood, for a moment, inhaling the smoke of cheap cigars, and the odours of stale people and stale wine and smoky lamps. The Café d'Antan smelt strong, after the cold air of the street—the comparatively clean air of the dung-spattered rue Débâcle.

He drew a deep breath; the warm pungency of the atmosphere went into him. At first he could hear nothing but a babble, for the steamy café was like a boiling kettle. But after a second or two, while he stood leaning on his cane, it seemed to Major Ratapoil that from somewhere above the smoke, voices unhooked themselves, as it were, like bats from remote shadowy places, and came down, twittering. This, of course, was because, out of the chaos came the sharp sound of his own name.

"Hey, look, Isidor," said a man, "Ratapoil."

"Ratapoil? Who's Ratapoil?"

"*The* Ratapoil, there is only one Ratapoil. . . . Hey, Raoul—he never heard of Ratapoil!"

"Leave the boy alone, Marcel. What do you want of him? He is from Chartres. How could he have heard of Ratapoil?"

"All right, I am a provincial; it's understood—I am ignorant."

Raoul, who had drunk too much wine, roared with laughter and said, at the top of his voice: "Major Ratapoil of the Infantry, the same one that killed a colonel, a major, a captain, and three lieutenants of the Dragoons in one morning, and was broken for it. Ratapoil!"

Then Major Ratapoil was happy. The foul air of the Café d'Antan, with which he filled his lungs as he heaved a pleasant sigh, tasted sweet. He pretended not to have heard; but he smiled under his moustaches and pushed his hat a little farther over his right eye, and dragged his cuffs down to his knuckles—from which, as soon as he relaxed his grip, they sprang away, revealing again his great bony wrists. Then he heard his name again, but spoken discreetly, calmly but urgently, not more than half a yard from his ear.

He turned his head, looking down in his lowering way from his great height, twisted his whole body to the left, without changing the position of his feet, and crying: "*Cazac!*" gripped by the shoulders a short man dressed in a snuff-coloured coat with golden buttons. "Cazac! What, you? I'm glad to see you, upon my word of honour. Let us drink a bottle of wine, eh? Where have you been? What have you been doing? But how elegant you are!"

"My dear Ratapoil, you are the very man I wanted to see," said the man called Cazac, in a cool, carefully modulated voice, looking up at Ratapoil. Most men looked up when they talked to Ratapoil: Cazac was not a little man; he was rather, as one might say, a big man abbreviated. Most of his body appeared to have been sucked into his massive out-thrust chest and his heavy, globular head.

His great, smooth face exactly fitted the glossy red skin that covered it, and his colourless and protuberant eyes seemed to stand upon the surface of it like rain drops on a ripe apple—cold, clear, steady but impermanent. And as Major Ratapoil had remarked, he was indeed elegantly dressed; except that a man who had the habit of observing such things might have observed that all his clothes were new.

CAZAC said: "I came here in the hope of finding you. Ratapoil, my dear fellow, where in the devil have you been? I swear to you that I have been looking for you over the length and breadth of Paris. Upon my faith, I have sat in this stinking place until midnight, every night for the past three weeks. Where were you? What's the latest Ratapoil scandal?"

"No scandal," said Ratapoil. "I haven't the wherewithal. Nothing but a slight recurrence of the old Neapolitan ague. Come and crack a bottle of good wine with me." Ratapoil furtively felt the milled edge of his last silver coin, but Cazac said:

"You will drink a bottle of wine with *me*, comrade-in-arms."

"What, Cazac, my old friend! Have you come into a fortune?"

"I'll tell you about that when we've sat down and got our breath."

Ratapoil, pleasantly surprised to find himself suddenly in a convivial mood, stroked one of Cazac's lapels with a hard thumb and said: "Broadcloth! And look at these buttons—solid gold!"

"Silver-gilded. Be quiet, Ratapoil."

But Ratapoil prodded Cazac in the ribs and slapped him on the belly where his pockets were, saying: "A watch, or may I be damned! . . . and upon my soul, a purse! A purse!" Then he forced his right hand into one of Cazac's pockets and pulled out a long purse of woven silk which he emptied into the broad palm of his left. "Twenty Napoleons!" he said.

"Give me back ten of them," said Cazac.

Major Ratapoil handed over ten of the gold coins, which Cazac counted carefully into his purse, pulling the ring tight over the heavy little lump of money before putting it away. But Major Ratapoil turned the ten coins in his hand until the head of the Emperor was visible—even Cazac's money was brand new—and, saying "for luck," spat upon them. As he spoke, he sneered; and when he spat, he spat more vehemently than gentlemen spit for luck, if they spit at all.

"Ah, yes," said Cazac, squeezing his mouth into a dimple which was his way of smiling—and his eyes became smaller and brighter. "That is what we wanted to talk to you about, Ratapoil. We knew we could count on you, my dear Ratapoil."

"We? Who is we?"

"Later, later I will tell you everything. In the meantime, a bottle of wine?"

RATAPOIL said: "You shall have the best bottle of wine in the world." Jingling the gold in his pocket he felt something small and vaguely unpleasant: it was the little piece of silver to which he had been clinging when he came into the Café d'Antan. He threw it away, and it rolled under the table of a hawk-faced old gentleman with a gold-headed stick and no shirt, who put his foot on it. He was one of the most constant and least profitable customers of the Café d'Antan: an impoverished nobleman named de Brie, contemptuously nicknamed Debris. And debris he was, indeed—a bit of the rubble of a shattered state of affairs.

Ratapoil, who was acquainted with the old gentleman, and who had instinctively looked to see where the silver coin rolled and fell, went to his table and, balancing one of Cazac's bright gold Napoleons on the tip of a forefinger, said: "Monsieur de Brie, if you will allow me: I had the good fortune to observe that you inadvertently dropped this Napoleon. Allow me to return it."

He smiled pleasantly, twisting his heavy sand-coloured moustaches. Old Monsieur de Brie took the coin with a gracious nod of his weary grey head and said: "I am obliged to you, my dear Major Ratapoil. No doubt it slipped through a hole in my pocket. But what, after all, is a Napoleon?"

"Napoleons? My dear Monsieur de Brie, they come, and they go, as you and I know very well. I do not give a damn for a Napoleon. Do you?"

Cazac pulled at Ratapoil's sleeve, and whispered: "Enough, enough, Ratapoil. Come to the table."

When he was seated and after they had touched glasses and were drinking their wine, Ratapoil said: "Cazac, my old friend, what is boiling up? I know you. What's the idea? *New* clothes. Gold in your pocket. Giving it away, of all things—you, of all people! What's going on? I know you, Cazac. I knew you when you were in the Commissariat; you never gave one biscuit away for nothing. Oh yes, Cazac, I know *you*! Will you be so good as to tell me what the devil you mean by coming here in a new suit of clothes and giving me ten Napoleons for nothing. For nothing, mark you!"

"Be a good fellow, Ratapoil, and lower your voice. Let's go for a walk."

"What for?"

"We'll walk a little while I tell you all about it."

Ratapoil rose, with a shrug, and, arm-in-arm with Cazac, walked out of the Café d'Antan into the rue Débâcle.

The rue Débâcle was a short, narrow, squalid street, dark and secretive; an excellent place for a murder. The rotting houses leaned at crazy angles. The overhanging roofs had the appearance of lowering foreheads, and the unclean, faintly lighted windows were like watchful eyes; when the candles flickered, they winked meaningly at one another. Many of the panes were patched with brown paper; these were the bruised black eyes of this disreputable street, this rookery of thieves, garrotters, cut-throats, extortionists, pimps, and conspirators.

In the winter, it wallowed in mire. In the summer, it sweltered so that the unaccustomed passer-by held his breath and hurried on. At the bottom of the street there was a grating under which ran the great sewer of Paris, from which, after sunset, there emerged a multitude of hungry and fearless grey rats. Perhaps as a consequence of this, rue Débâcle was infested with homeless, famished, prowling cats that howled all night from the roof tops.

"It is not exactly comfortable, if you understand what I mean, to make private conversation in the Café d'Antan," said Cazac.

Ratapoil looked down at him out of the corners of his keen eyes, and asked: "Why not?"

"The place is swarming with spies and informers, as you very well know, Ratapoil," said Cazac irritably. "Don't play innocent with me, Ratapoil."

"What, innocent? Who, me? I don't know what you mean. Spies? Informers? What have I to fear from spies or informers? I am an honest man. My conscience is clear. Anyone in the world has my full permission to spy on me."

THEN he said suddenly: "Come on, now, Cazac! An honest answer, for once in your life. What are you doing, dressed like a gentleman, with your pockets full of money? I don't ask you where you got it, because I know you as I know the inside of my pocket—the one with the hole in it. I know you never could have come by it honestly. You'd steal the cream out of a man's coffee, Cazac. You wouldn't give me a sou unless you were certain to get back twenty. And before you gave me that sou you'd make conditions.

"Eh? Well, here you give me ten Napoleons—just like that. What dirty work is it now, eh, Cazac? An old soldier somewhat down on his luck cannot afford to indulge in fastidiousness, if I may use the long word; but he may retain certain scruples, Cazac. Talk!"

"I am sorry that you have such a low opinion of me, my dear Ratapoil," said Cazac. "You accepted my money, however."

"*Whose* money?" asked Ratapoil. "*Your* money? Never in a thousand years. Not possible. Come on, now. I knew you when you were in the Commissariat, and I know you now. I knew you before you were broken over that little affair of the seventy-five casks of brandy that went astray, my dear fellow," said Ratapoil, brutally jocular. "And apropos of that; if I'd had any say in the matter, by God, I'd have had you shot on the spot, Cazac."

"Thank you," said Cazac.

"Don't mention it. You know me. I know you. I'd cut your throat for a sou——"

"You are very moderate, Ratapoil."

"Thanks. On second thoughts, in your case, Cazac, I'd cut your throat free of charge, for love. You know me—whenever it came to a little honest looting I never hesitated to help myself

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THE STATE OF THE NAVY Continuing a John Bull Survey by IAN BEVAN

Launching an experimental model. Today some 1,500 scientists work full time for the Royal Navy, planning the shape of ships to come

Science goes to Sea

Have warships a future in the atom age? Can the submarine be beaten? Naval research is not merely laboratory stuff. Trial craft are fitted out; there are "guinea pig" tests in mid-ocean

"SOMEWHERE IN BRITAIN"—at an address which even in peacetime the Admiralty prefers to keep secret—a group of grown men can be found almost any day sailing model ships in a large tank with all the earnestness of little boys sailing toy yachts on the Round Pond in Kensington Gardens.

The boys laugh as they play, but the men are deadly serious, for their models represent the ships of the Royal Navy, the tank is the seven seas, and their enemy is the atom bomb.

These men are employees of the Admiralty Experimental Works, and their chief is the Director of Naval Construction who is responsible for the plans of Britain's fighting ships.

With them work the scientists, architects and draughtsmen of the Naval Construction Research Establishment, whose urgent aim is to design ships which can withstand the tremendous blast of a near-hit by an atom bomb.

The two groups are part of a network of scientific research and experimental organizations which has been created by the Admiralty to help plan and guide what the First Lord has called "the new Royal Navy."

The Navy's own scientific services now cost more than £7,000,000 a year and occupy the full time of some 1,500 scientists. In addition they call for the part-time services of many other sections of the Navy, and of outside Government and civil research groups.

True to its title of "the Silent Service," the Navy has said little about the scientific side of its activities, although the spotlight of publicity has focused briefly on three marines who lived for a week on emergency rations in an open boat, and on a Naval doctor who went swimming in Arctic waters to test the protective qualities of a cotton escape suit.

The silence has an obvious security motive. All navies in the world have much the same problems to solve. Other navies—possible enemies in any third World War—would like to know on which of these problems we are concentrating so they could plan counter measures.

Is it submarine fuel? Infra-red equipment? Underwater explosives? The Admiralty is not saying, but here for the first time is a general survey which shows the wide range of problems being investigated. Necessarily, many names, locations and details of specific experiments have been suppressed.

The three main foreseeable threats to our Navy in another war would be the atom bomb, the guided missile and the submarine. Ever since the first atom bomb exploded in 1945, Naval architects have been pondering ways of building ships which could withstand anything short of a direct hit. The United States Navy went to the length of exploding a bomb at Bikini to give its architects an idea of the problems involved, and some of our men were observers at this test.

Results of their work will be incorporated in two new frigates on which construction begins early next year. They will be Britain's first warships of entirely postwar design—sleek, low, streamlined.

The atom bomb is not the only headache for the men at N.C.R.E. They are concerned with building better and, if possible, cheaper ships, so they investigate the most efficient and economical methods of straightforward structural design.

Passed to them "for attention please" are such problems as the relative merits of welding and riveting, the possibilities of prefabrication and the use of light alloys.

Someone had the idea that ships of orthodox construction "wobbled" in rough weather, so they equipped a cruiser with a bewildering array of delicate instruments and went to sea to find out. They chose a period when normally the Atlantic is in a mood to make the hardiest sailor feel queasy, and for three weeks they experienced almost flat calm. Frustrated, they returned to port with the

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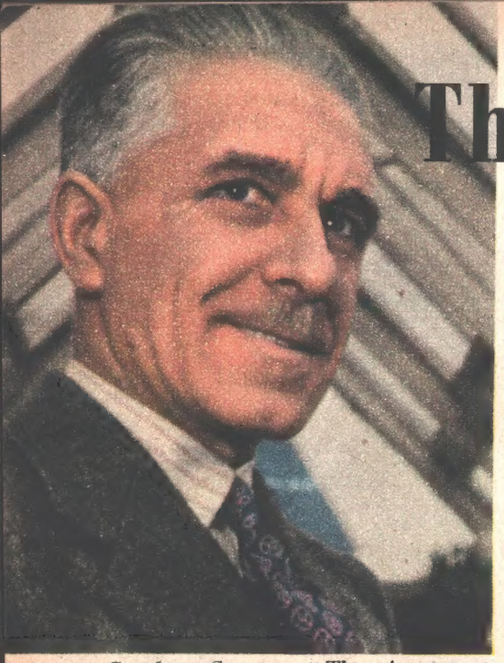
The thrill of Cactus-growing

All shapes and sizes, the weird, exotic plants of the desert have caught on among amateur growers here. And green fingers aren't needed

by DON EVERITT



Stanley Scott: "The important thing is to know when to stop"

THE CACTUS IS COMING into fashion. The National Cactus and Succulent Society, formed only four years back, today boasts a membership of nearly four thousand cactophiles. And nurserymen specializing in these plants report rapidly rising sales all over the country.

Several cactophiles are ex-Desert Rats with horticultural leanings who took a liking to the plants while chasing Rommel's armies. Many people who have tried unsuccessfully for years to grow flowers are finding to their joy that green fingers are not essential with cacti.

And others who have "always longed to grow things" but have never had the time are now learning that the cactus will actually thrive on neglect. (One woman who went overseas on a business trip found her cacti still flourishing in the pot on the window ledge when she returned home—a year later.)

Inherited The Hobby

The majority of Britain's cactophiles are in the window-ledge category, with collections ranging from half a dozen to forty or fifty. Typical of the minority for whom only a greenhouse is large enough to satisfy their needs is Stanley Henderson Scott, of Nottingham.

A greying, middle-aged bachelor with a precise Scots voice, Scott inherited the hobby from his father as a boy. He won his first silver cup when he was twelve. Today in his greenhouse he has 600 different cacti and other succulents, all neatly labelled and growing in a well-ordered army of plant pots. He says: "That's about all I can manage, and one of the important things with succulents is to know when to stop."

When you see a catalogue you appreciate what Scott means. The succulent (water-bearing) family of plants is divided into two groups—cacti and other succulents. A cactus is distinguished by its areoles—the miniature pin-cushions from which the spines grow; some other succulents have spines but none has areoles.

Species of succulents run into several thousands. Cacti alone are subdivided into tribes, sub-tribes, genera and species. A sub-tribe may contain up to forty genera and some genera have two or three hundred species. Often their differences are extremely subtle.

To most people the cactus is a weird plant providing suitable background to a "Western," but Scott feels that the succulent has had a raw deal. He talks volubly about its beautiful colouring—"from deep purple to emerald green"—and its vivid flowers; and he argues strongly about the variety and beauty of its shape.

Certainly, the plants in his collection form every recognized geometrical shape and not a few that they have dreamed up for themselves. There are columns, globes, rosettes, barrels, spirals and cones; they are twisted, ridged and angular; some are like balls of wool, boxing gloves, clusters of eggs, bunches of bananas, two human ears stuck together, beaver tails.

Succulents range in size from tiny buttons in the sand to sixty-foot giants. But, says Scott, "I prefer to grow the small varieties up to about a foot high. You can collect more."

Foot-wide Blooms

The flowers are just as striking as the plants themselves. Succulents little more than three-quarters of an inch across will often have more than a dozen blooms—each of them larger than the plant. The night-flowering cereus cactus has blooms as much as a foot wide. Other succulents grow stems three or four times their own height before flowering.

The flowers are richly coloured—red, yellow, brown, cream, purple; white. . . . "And," Scott adds, "with a properly organized collection you can have flowers all the year round—from the zygocactus in January to the mimicry plants in December."

But Scott feels there is more to succulents than just their shape and flowers. "Just think," he says, "what conditions they had to adapt themselves to in the desert. Nothing but sand and stones, temperatures varying from a hundred degrees in daytime to thirty at night, long droughts and short rains—conditions in which no other plant, and, for that matter, very few animals, could exist.

"How did they do it? They learned to snatch every breath of moisture, to store it and to cut wastage to a minimum.

"A succulent can control its breathing, too. If the roots stop finding water the breathing pores close to prevent moisture escaping. The plant keeps going on its own resources."

The secret of growing succulents, Scott says, is imitating the conditions under which they live naturally. The majority of his cacti, for instance, thrive in a sandy soil and as much sunshine as possible. A few others prefer lime, and a crank in the family here and there will only exist on chalk.

Scott waters his cacti from April to September and rests them in winter. Treatment with his other succulents varies—"it's all according to the drought periods in the deserts."

"I give them all plenty of fresh air and keep the temperature around forty degrees in winter," Scott adds. "Our damp frosts are one of the two things to be avoided when growing succulents. The other is excessive moisture." His motto is: when in doubt, don't water.

Prices of succulent plants vary from a shilling to £10 or more for the rare varieties. They can be propagated in three ways—seeds, cuttings or grafts.

Sowing Is Simple

Growing from seeds, which cost about half a crown a packet, is the method of the true enthusiast. Scott says: "It's quite simple. Scatter the seeds on top of an equal mixture of peat and sand, put in a warm dark place—say the airing cupboard—and keep well watered. Usually in three days you'll see the plants."

Of cuttings, Scott warns the novice: "It's extremely fascinating to take pieces of almost any size from almost anywhere on a plant and just lay them on the soil and watch them take root and grow into complete new plants. But darn soon you'll be fighting to get in the greenhouse."

Grafted plants are mostly freaks. In fact, says Scott, it is this aspect that has attracted a certain number of people to the hobby.

They find delight in producing weird combinations, such as a globular cactus sitting on the top of a columnar variety. This is a practice which Scott gravely deplores—"it's wrong to fool around with Nature."

Grow All Year Round

The average succulent grown from seed reaches a height of one to six inches by the end of the first year and will flower any time between then and its fourth year. Unlike an ordinary plant it doesn't die off; it grows and flowers year after year.

"That's one of the beauties of succulents," Scott says, "you've got them all the year round."

Among Scott's favourite varieties are the "living stones," the lithops which imitates pebbles, the titanopsis which is like limestone, and the pleiospilos which copies granite even to its reddish tints.

Compared with other plants succulents are singularly free from disease and pests and, treated properly, they are long-lived. The oldest in Scott's collection is a cleistocactus, a mere baby at forty years.

Scott says: "Two or three hundred years is not an uncommon age in some varieties. . . . Cacti as family heirlooms—how's that for an idea?"

Gems from the Scott cactus collection—a well-ordered army of pot plants

When the smoke cleared, the full damage could be seen. But Reuben stood joyous guard over his logs

A SIMPLE SOUL

The whole village was there to hear the preacher thundering that Sunday. Except old Reuben. He was making his own thunder

by **BLANCHE BEAUMONT**

ILLUSTRATED BY TONY WEARE

IT SET THE VILLAGERS a pretty problem when Miss Smith died and left her cottage and her orchard to old Reuben. In the ordinary way, folk with anything to leave simply passed it on by word of mouth. This often led to bickering, if the nearest and dearest were numerous, as to the exact interpretation of the deceased's intentions, in which the villagers could take sides with no fear of anything more drastic than strained relations.

But Miss Smith had *made a will*; she had written down, bold and clear, that she "bequeathed" her cottage and her orchard to Reuben Morgan, and her five hundred pounds in the bank to a home for dumb animals.

This will had been witnessed, on one of Miss Smith's rare trips to the neighbouring town where her bank held her five hundred pounds, and it therefore appeared to be all proper and in order.

But the butcher, who was a thinking man, said he did not think a person who was eccentric could lawfully leave anything to a person who was not quite all there.

He went on to say that a will had to be "proved," whatever that might mean, and that he shouldn't wonder but what Reuben would have to be made a Ward in Chancery.

All this talk about the law was rather alarming. It was generally felt in the village that once you got caught up with the law you were never finished with it.

No one grudged Reuben his bequest; the difficulty was getting him to understand he had any claim to it, as he was, indeed, what you might call "simple."

But it was Miss Smith, and only Miss Smith, who had ever referred to Reuben as "the village idiot." This was understood to be merely an expression of exasperation or spite on her part, or it may have been that she genuinely thought Reuben some sort of an idiot for not marrying her and her cottage and her five hundred pounds in the bank.

People wondered why she should remember him in her will at all; perhaps she wanted to come and haunt him, they said, if he should choose to live in her cottage, a thing that was most unlikely. Miss Smith had haunted Reuben enough in her lifetime, without results.

SIMPLE, he might be, and weak in the head, but strong enough in resolution to withstand all the assaults made against his bachelorhood. Indeed, it was difficult sometimes to define just how "simple" Reuben really was.

For Reuben's own cottage adjoined Miss Smith's, a mile and a half out of the village on the road to the quarry. There were some sour old crones who said it wasn't right for bachelor and spinster to live so close, at once together and apart, away from the rest of the community. No doubt Miss Smith thought so, too.

But Reuben was always too simple to understand what she, or they, meant.

He was well liked by the villagers. He was gentle and childlike, and always good humoured. At eighty, he was still hale and spry, and he looked after himself and his cottage as well as any woman could, and made no demands upon anyone.

When you look round the world today and see what comes of people being too clever by half, it seems a pity there aren't more simpletons about.

The villagers decided that the butcher had better take on Reuben's affairs for him, and it was arranged that he should shortly make a trip to the neighbouring town to seek the advice of the manager of the bank where Miss Smith had her five hundred pounds and her title deeds.

In the meantime, Reuben, quite unaware of his important position as Miss Smith's legatee, went about his ordinary daily pursuits.

ONE of Reuben's unfailing pleasures in life was to go up the mountainside to the quarry. He loved to watch the men working and to hear and see the blasting. He would chuckle like a small boy with a toy cannon as the rocks and boulders came crashing down when the charge went off.

He was a great favourite with the quarrymen; he was a good hand at making tea and could be trusted with simple messages, which he delivered with great pride in his achievement.

They joked with him about Miss Smith's cottage; he did not seem to understand, but laughed with them, knowing their chaff to be good natured.

But they found that Miss Smith's death had made an effect of sorts upon Reuben. He had seen the little pine coffin carried through the front gate to the graveyard. He knew there was no coming back for Miss Smith.

He made known a wish.

There was a very old apple tree, past fruit bearing, with its roots in Reuben's garden, but inclining its branches into Miss Smith's orchard. Reuben, it seemed, had always had a great longing to chop down the tree to make logs for his winter's comfort, but had never dared in Miss Smith's lifetime, fearing some embroilment with the old lady.

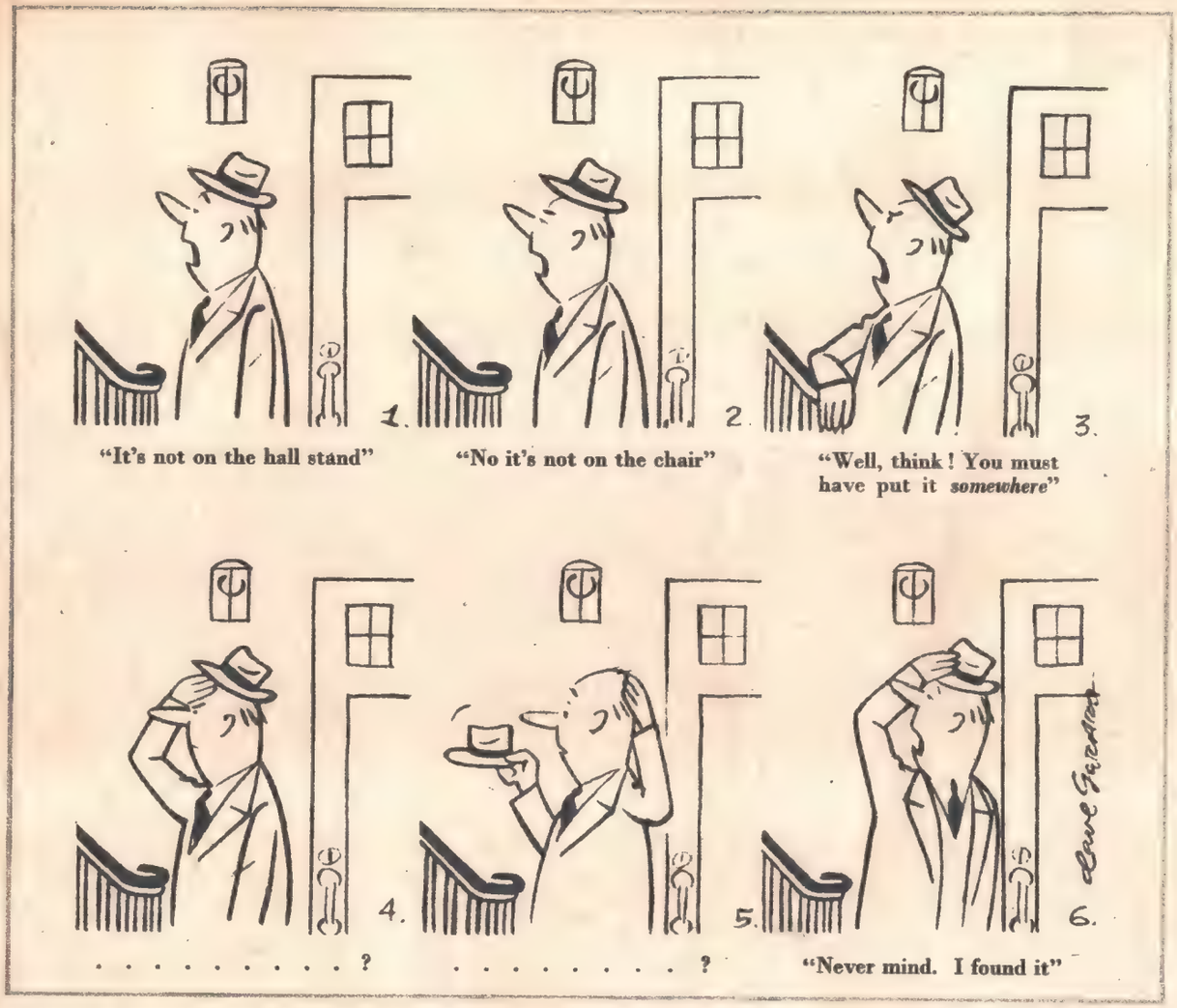
It was now willingly done for him. The old man took a thwack or two at the gnarled bole, just for the pleasure of it. He chuckled with delight when he saw the handsome pile of logs they made for him against the fence just by his back door, where he could handily get at them.

No one would have suspected Reuben of a secret longing, but the possession of this tree seemed to be the consummation of a long-endured want. He gazed at the logs like a miser upon his gold, covering them tenderly with an old tarpaulin. In the cottage and orchard he showed no interest.

In due course the butcher made his trip.

When he returned, he announced that it was going to take some time, and had cost six and eightpence already. But he had a proposition to make which would solve the tenancy of the cottage temporarily.

For some time the village had felt the lack of a carpenter, most of the able-bodied men being stonemasons. There was a skilled man from the neighbouring town willing to bring his craft to the



village. He had a wife and family and would need to be housed. Since Reuben could not live in two cottages at once, and showed no signs of wishing to leave his own, why should the carpenter not occupy Miss Smith's cottage on a monthly tenancy, the rent to be collected "in trust" for Reuben.

There were some who objected to the introduction of foreigners into the village, especially from the neighbouring town, which was well known to have all sorts of "goings on."

They were overruled, but they looked smug when the visitors arrived and installed themselves.

The carpenter and his family were all as slim as weasels. Now, while everyone knows that no one can help the shape they're made in, yet it was true that the strangers had an odd air of being slim, not by an accident of nature, but as though so designed for some sinister purpose of their own. Getting quickly in and out of places where they had no business, for instance.

They were carefully watched. They kept themselves to themselves. This aroused just as much suspicion as any attempt at free and friendly intercourse. One simply could not help feeling that whatever they did was calculated to an end, and that end would be good for them, but bad for someone else.

The carpenter knew his work. He went about it smoothly and skilfully. He was reticent without being surly.

This was difficult to understand. He was thought to be "deep," there being no evidence to suggest he was anything more criminal.

The first hint that they might be keeping more to themselves than merely themselves, came through Reuben. He suddenly started to mope.

He sat on the mountainside, as was his habit, but instead of watching the blasting and quarrying with his usual enthusiasm, he looked up into the sky, or on the ground, and was obviously in the toil of troubled thought.

It was difficult to know what was wrong. When asked, he sighed mournfully and shook his head.

One day, he did not visit the quarry at all.

So singular an omission could not be allowed to pass. He might be ill, his time might be come. A quarryman called at the cottage.

He found Reuben sitting on a chair outside his back door, his eyes fixed anxiously on his log-pile, which reached as high as the fence dividing his property from that willed on him by Miss Smith.

"It did ought to be higher," was all he would say, "it did ought to be much higher."

This might have been accepted as just another of the old man's slightly fuddled notions had it not been for the suspicion ever attaching to his neighbours. The carpenter's wife was perpetually cooking and curing, her range continually fed, doubtless, by Reuben's logs.

Such petty theft from an old and helpless man roused great indignation. The matter was referred to the butcher, as Reuben's self-appointed guardian.

The butcher, whose protégé the carpenter was, and whose home was at present being embellished by the latter's skill, was reluctant to charge the man directly.

"We don't *know*," he said, "as he *does* steal the logs. We've no proof. It might be one of Reuben's hallumination."

The preacher was consulted. Always ready to go full steam after a transgressor, he had the solution. He would denounce thieves and poachers from the pulpit on Sunday.

He was a denouncer of the first order, and had no equal for miles around in the way of verbal assault and battery upon wrongdoing. The carpenter and his family were regular chapelgoers; they would have their sin, if it was their sin, brought home to them, and it would be sharply pointed.

It was a very fine Sunday. The chapel was crowded, everyone knew what was in the air.

The carpenter, his wife and children, looked well washed and well content with themselves. Reuben was not present. He rarely came to chapel now. When he did, he threw everyone out by singing the hymns with disconcerting power and complete disregard for the accepted rhythms.

The hymns this morning were taken at speed; it was understood that the preacher should have plenty of time to expand himself in his subject.

No matinée idol could have wished for more eager audience. They could hardly wait.

He was going to make it hot for someone, and they all, with the exception of the carpenter, knew who it was, so that they could sit back and enjoy it to the full.

The preacher made it hot. He seasoned it with fire and brimstone. He expounded, he expanded, he exploded.

He said that those who broke the eighth commandment might just as well go ahead and break all the others and be well and truly damned for their pains. He prophesied what would happen to them, their wives and their children.

He was just going into details of the divine retribution, and all eyes, so far as possible, were fixed on the carpenter and his brood, to see how they were taking it, when there came a sudden thunder crack.

But there was no storm outside, and no quarrying on Sundays.

The day remained bright and clear; congregation and preacher remained as though petrified.

It was one thing to call down the wrath of God; it was quite another to have it arrive suddenly and perhaps indiscriminately.

A WOMAN, turning her head, saw through the chapel window a pillar of smoke hanging over the mountainside, obviously a portent that the world was going to end within a matter of minutes. She screamed, children started to cry, panic ran through the chapel like quicksilver.

In a second the worshippers were all out in the street, swarming up the mountainside. Preacher and carpenter, both lightly built men, were running neck and neck.

When they came to the spot where the pillar of smoke had vanished into the clear sky, Miss Smith's cottage had vanished with it, and the hams that the carpenter's wife had been curing had gone too, along with the pots and pans and sticks and stones.

The orchard was a ruin of blackened stumps.

"Reuben!" shouted someone.

He had a tile or two off his roof, and a window out.

But he himself stood joyous guard before his log-pile, which remained miraculously intact.

"Now I knows the varmint as took my logs," he crowed triumphantly. "I put dynamite in them top ones, I did."

NOW YOU KNOW

DO YOU BLOW YOUR NOSE properly—or are you a "tip-squeezer"?

A "tip-squeezer" shrouds his handkerchief around the tip of his nose and, as he blows out, grasps it in a vice-like grip.

What happens? The more he squeezes, the more he sets up a back pressure, and, instead of the stuff coming down as it should, it goes up—up into the little tubes that lead off from the nose and into the holes and hollows (the sinuses) of the face bones. And that's not good, especially when you've got a cold. The proper way to blow your nose is to hold the handkerchief, not at the tip of the nose but at the bony part up top, just below the eyes. Then blow both sides at once without squeezing.

Jean Simmons—star in a tough spot

by CHARLES HAMBLETT

In a way her story is the story of British films—early talent wrongly exploited in a series of second-rate films. It's time she took stock

Jean and Stewart Granger: "Local tennis was swapped for Granger's fast car. She was fun to be with"

WHEN JEAN SIMMONS celebrates her twenty-first birthday next month with a housewarming at her West End flat, offstage noises will be provided by the crackup of film production as Jean knows it. It seems hardly likely, whatever steps J. Arthur Rank may take to bolster his shaking empire, that his production unit—which holds this star under contract for the next eight years—will ever again operate in the old, grandiose way.

Thus, when the last cork has popped and her last guest has departed, Miss Simmons may well give thought to her past, present and future relationship with that unpredictable monster—the Organization.

Without straining the point it is possible to find many of the reasons for the present decline in British film-making reflected in certain highlights of Jean's career—not merely by recapitulating well-worn biographical data, but by considering her as an artist and a woman. For, in a way, Jean Simmons *is* the last few years of the British film industry.

Reflects The Ups And Downs

Her brief but spectacular career reflects the ups and down of British films since the war. Beginning with her début in that excellent film *Way to the Stars* rising to her peak performance as Ophelia in *Hamlet*, and trailing off in a series of shoddy parts in badly thought-out films, many of the reasons for the present sad situation in the studios and the misuse of talent within the structure of the Rank Organization can be seen in Jean's own story.

It is a story I know intimately. I shall never forget my first meeting with Jean. One dreary afternoon, during the first winter after the war, I was sent to a box-like house in the North London suburb of Cricklewood to collect material for what appeared to be a routine glamour story.

At that time "starlets" were being discovered by the dozen. Reporters were continually interviewing shrewd, hard-eyed, ambitious, abysmally dull and basically untalented young women who had signed optional contracts with film producers.

The slim girl of sixteen who answered my knock led me into a tiny, conventionally-furnished parlour, wore the regulation tweed skirt and tight woollen jumper. I noticed with mild distaste that her hair was dyed a garish blonde.

Happy And Relaxed

But when she offered to hang up my overcoat to ensure my "feeling the benefit later," Jean, to use the film jargon, "jelled." There was something extraordinary about the girl. She was neither brittle nor hard eyed. She spoke in an ordinary, yet melodious, "off-beat" voice. She did not seem precocious. She seemed happy and relaxed in her simple environment.

Here is an impression I jotted in my notebook at the time: "Hazel eyes, set widely apart, frank, deeply expressive. Pink, petal lips delicately stencilled under a *retroussé* nose. Freckles. Beautiful shoulders. Coltish, immature. Voice like the tumbling bells in a lonely steeple." Later, I added a postscript: "Too good to be true."

Apart from this rare gift of personality, there was nothing awe-inspiring about the young Jean. She was not an intellectual, nor did she endeavour to be anything but her own, uncomplicated self.

Her interests were those commonly found in a girl of sixteen. Tennis, collecting

jazz records, jiving, riding on the back of fast motor cycles, ice skating, going to the pictures, having crushes on film stars, occupied her more than reading Shakespeare's sonnets or studying Stanislavsky on acting.

She was acutely conscious of her appearance and deplored the fact that she had to dye her hair for the part of young Estella in *Great Expectations*. "It's awful," she confided. "When I queue at the cinema, other girls think I'm stuck-up because of this expensive hair-do. The neighbours are beginning to shake their heads over me."

She pointed to a photograph on the piano. "That's how I look when my hair's natural," she said.

"You must be a great Vivien Leigh fan," I said.

"Oh, but that's *me*!" she countered quickly. "I adore Viv, of course." She had, in fact, stood in for Vivien Leigh during the star's illness when *Caesar and Cleopatra* was being shot.

Rose At 5.30 a.m.

In the next few months I saw quite a lot of Jean. She was always affable on the set. At home she would rise at 5.30 a.m. to be ready at 6.30 for the studio car.

Her attitude to films was extremely practical. "I've no intention of losing my head," she told me. "It's a risky business, and you never know when you might be dropped. Of course, I want to succeed, but I've a long way to go yet."

Her father was a P.T. instructor at the Regent Street Polytechnic. Also sharing the five-roomed house were her mother, a sister and a brother-in-law. So cramped was space, that items like spades and bicycles were parked in the tiny kitchen where Jean generally helped out with the dishes. Another sister was a G.I. bride, living in the U.S.A.

The first great shock in Jean's emotional life was when her father died suddenly. She would dearly have loved him to see her triumphs.

When her hair was restored to its natural brunette, her likeness to Vivien Leigh was astonishing. It is to her credit that, despite this, she developed a technique and personality of her own.

Experience Came Quickly

What did the Organization do with this raw material? The decision-makers quickly recognized her ability and kept her busy. If bundling her into one film after another did not improve her histrionic talents, it gave her practical experience of film-making.

Jean became thoroughly at home in front of cameras. She became—innocently—a formidable "scene stealer." Old-timers like Valerie Hobson and Margaret Lockwood came to dread the prospect of appearing in films with her.

But she appeared in several makeshift films with the result that, despite high-powered publicity, she was at times in danger of becoming just another Rank pin-up.

An indication of the unthinking attitude towards this youngster was the reluctance with which she was

At sixteen, Jean lived with parents in North London, helped keep house

assigned to Olivier, who wanted her as his Ophelia. Though her part in *Hamlet* would obviously establish her as an international film personality, it was only with great difficulty that her scheduled assignments to several hack films were reshuffled.

Olivier has had a profound influence on Jean's professional life. Gently, patiently he taught her to appreciate a subtler range of values than those provided by a Palais de Danse. That she possessed a superb natural talent was confirmed by the great actor's confidence in her. Hamlet and Ophelia on the screen, they played Pygmalion and Galatea on the set.

This was the moment when Jean might easily have stepped into the Garbo, Bergmann or Leigh class; but suburban values and the Organization's tempting long-term contract won the day. Her professional mentors rewarded her by wrapping her in a sarong and dispatching her to the Fiji Islands for her next opus, *The Blue Lagoon*.

On returning from location, via Hollywood and New York, where her naïve charm impressed the local cynics, she rushed straight home to mother. Friends wondered how Jean would settle down in Cricklewood.

She was now earning £12,000 a year, but the Simmons household still did not run to a maid. Jean helped her mother with the housework, usually washed her own "smalls" and often cooked her own meals. She always made a point of asking her mother when she wanted to go out in the evening, usually to patronize a local hop.

She remained loyal to the boys and girls in the road, asserting: "I never want to live anywhere but in this house, where I spent so many happy years. After all, my old school friends live here and I would miss them dreadfully."

Became A Willing Drudge

Plenty of work awaited her in the studios. The Organization was not only making too few good films; it was also putting Jean into too many second-rate ones. Though there were protests that she was being overworked, her modesty, her eagerness to learn and her complete lack of temperament, made her a willing drudge.

This amenable attitude did not help to increase her stature with the fans. On leaving a small cinema in Derbyshire, after seeing Jean's *Woman in the Hall*, I heard a factory lass comment: "Ee, if that's all Jean Simmons can do, you can keep her."

Despite Jean's regard for her old home, new influences were conspiring to keep her out late. The local tennis court and a neighbouring chum's motor bike were being swapped for expensive night clubs and the fast cars of Michael Wilding and Stewart Granger. They both found Jean fun to be with.

Then Granger made a momentous decision. *He* would take a hand in shaping Jean's career. She had confided in him that she wished to gain stage experience, and had expressed the hope that her contract would allow her to do several months of stage work a year.

"I know I won't be very good at it at first," she had added. "I'm just hoping I won't be too awful."

Mr. Rank Disapproved

"Acting on the stage," Granger responded, in effect, "is as easy as sparring with Freddie Mills. String along with me, kid, and I'll soon cure your stage fright."

Despite "Uncle Arthur" Rank's profound disapproval and subsequent delaying tactics, Jean and "Jimmy" eventually had their way. They collected a distinguished cast and set off on tour in *The Power of Darkness*, a Tolstoy short story, clumsily adapted, on the subject of lost souls and empty samovars.

Even now, only a little of the behind-the-scenes story can be told. The play was a fiasco. I saw it in Glasgow three weeks before the London opening and was appalled to find that what was intended to be tragic crossed the footlights as slapstick.

The script was full of absurd colloquialisms. Yet Granger told me that the play would "be okay by the time we reach town."

It was easy to be frank with Granger, but well wishers could only maintain a tactful silence when Jean was present. She was nervously on edge. Tears were never far from her eyes. She was terrified.

"Wouldn't you be?" she snapped. "On the set if you slip up, the word 'cut' rushes to your aid. But I can't ask the audience to turn away a moment while I adjust an error."

To expose this delicate talent to such an ordeal was a major disaster—and in this case the blame could hardly be placed on either Mr. Rank or the Organization, except that they might have tried harder to stop her.

Since then the release of the Granger-Simmons trifle, *Adam and Evelyn*, has done little to enhance their reputation. This film was followed by a long Continental vacation for Jean, a final break from Cricklewood and her move to a "bachelor" flat.

Now she is back on the set in *So Long at the Fair*, which promises to be a routine costume drama with a trick ending.

She's At The Crossroads

Today, Jean is at the crossroads of her career. If Rank folds as a producer, where will her long-term contract with him land her? Would she survive being farmed out to independent producers who might exploit her name while recklessly casting her in unsuitable stories? Would she get a square deal in Hollywood, where British talent is apt to be cheapened and coarsened?

These questions—and others—confront Jean. She must consider her next moves carefully, for a succession of mischances, common enough in films, might easily result in turning her from spectacular success to sensational flop.

Of course, she cannot provide all the answers. Much depends on the Organization, on Rank and, by one of the curious paradoxes of this crazy industry, on Gabriel Pascal, temporarily moribund producer of *Caesar and Cleopatra*, who holds an option on Jean's services for one film a year.

Little Miss Simmons likes to be told what to do. Now, if she wants to survive, she must start telling other people what *she* wants *them* to do instead. Otherwise she will be engulfed in the tide of over-optimistic mediocrity which has swamped the industry itself.

OH, JOHNNY! **by TIM**

An extra lick of speed and the sleek home-made racer will flag 100 m.p.h. Not bad for a sixteen-inch car

Walker and his 10-c.c. Gordano. An earlier model crashed six months ago

90 m.p.h and no driver

by JOHN MAY

JOHN WALKER'S WORKSHOP is a shed in the back garden. There, in his spare time, he has manufactured two racing cars. The first was a green streamlined Austin Seven. The larger one is a long, low Gordano in polychromatic silver blue—a new make of British competition car.

Like boys with toys, we sat on the floor examining them in the front room of his house at Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire. They weighed five or six pounds apiece and both were about sixteen inches long.

The Gordano had already done well over ninety. How to squeeze the extra power to hit up 100 miles per hour: that was the problem. Both models were due to race that weekend at Eaton Bray aerodrome, near Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire.

The blurred venom with which model cars hurl themselves round a circular track only seventy-five feet across is at first almost frightening to the new onlooker. A large box on wheels painted in black and white checks is the timekeeper's office. A continuous racket like tearing calico breaks off now and again, and a loudspeaker announces: "The speed of that car was. . . ."

Ropes mark off the members' enclosure which completely encircles the track. Alongside them, opposite the timekeeper's office, is a row of a dozen folding tables, blue, yellow, green and black—the "pits."

On them are model cars of all colours and sizes.

Murky-looking Fuel

Tool boxes, oily rags, spare wheels and variegated bottles of murky-looking fuel clutter the tables and the grass beneath them. Mechanics cluster around, oiling, polishing, squeezing tyres, unscrewing cowlings, adjusting timing, and refuelling with tiny tubes poked into a headlamp, a radiator cap, and other unlikely orifices.

Models race against the clock, one at a time. The track is surrounded by a three-feet wire safety net. Nobody is allowed near it except a track marshal, one or two helpers and the owner of the car on the track.

The cars keep to the circle of concrete by being tethered to a central pivot by a fine wire cable. An electrical contact on the pivot connects to the timing apparatus in the office.

Starting methods vary. Holding a wheel or the flywheel against a spinning surface is the usual way of bringing the engines to life. One model gets going on the back wheel of a tandem, inverted, with four friends whirling the pedals.

Can Knock You Down

Cars with engines coupled direct to their back wheels have to be pushed off with a special stick; when one bursts into life, the owner has to step smartly over the wire guard out of the way. A clout on the foot with a model weighing up to seven pounds and travelling at fifty or more can knock a man's legs from under him and break bones.

The yowling note of the model's engine mounts higher, an accelerating four beats to the circuit. It flings round like a tethered bullet: "Wah-wor-WAH-*wheeooh*!" After several laps, the owner signals to the timekeeper to switch on the timing gear.

Six laps go to the quarter-mile, the normal racing distance. One silvery flash with a 2.5 cubic centimetre capacity engine does 55 m.p.h., mostly—so far as I can see—on one inside driving wheel and its tail skid. Its fuel consumption lower than the owner thought, it raises a laugh by yipping and snarling round the track almost endlessly, refusing to run out of fuel.

John Walker's 5-c.c. Austin replica does sixty, and his Gordano 10-c.c. model 91.84 m.p.h. He stops both by holding a rag or a rubber flap so that it hits an ignition-and-fuel switch that sticks up from these models like a radio aerial from a man-size car.

One or two models rip round the track at 112. But for two very good reasons they don't worry Walker. They're not home built, nor are they entirely British.

Cost Up To £50

Most model cars use ready-made engines. Many are constructed from kits of parts—either British or American—which are supplied complete. According to the ingenuity and pocket of the modeller, they can cost anything up to £50.

Some of the fastest models sacrifice everything to speed. They are, in fact, four-wheeled projectiles with little resemblance to any car ever seen on road or track.

John Walker is a true modeller who also wants speed. He builds his own models to scale — recognizable likenesses of actual racing cars. He makes his own engines from a solid two-inch duralumin bar.

Walker, who is a maintenance engineer in a brush factory, went casually to a race meeting in 1946.

It inspired him to begin making his Austin. Most model cars are built on a "pan" of cast or beaten aluminium, but this one had a proper chassis and springs. It used front-wheel drive, and Walker made every part of it except the tyres, ignition system and the batteries.

He pressed the disc wheels out of sheet aluminium with a steel pattern in a vice. His biggest thrill was when he screwed his hand-made engine to a wooden block in the same vice, stuck a copper tube into a bottle of fuel, spun the flywheel two or three times with a cord—and she started up for the first time ever.

Completed, the Austin managed 28 m.p.h. on the track, a speed it more than doubled within a year. But it *went*! This was the first time Walker had competed with the Edmonton Model Car Club, which he joined a few months before as a founder member.

There are some thirty local clubs in Britain affiliated to the Model Car Association; Edmonton is one of the liveliest. The guinea-a-year subscription provides also for a £10,000 third-party insurance.

About a year ago Walker got the itch to make a car that would do 100 m.p.h. That winter he built his 10-c.c. Gordano, incorporating improvements on his original smaller engine.

He mounted the cylinder horizontally, enlarged the exhaust ports, and "got a bit of boost" on the fuel pressure by having the air pipes to the tank facing forward.

Castor Oil Plus

Fuels used in model cars are highly explosive mixtures that would blow a family tourer to pieces. The basis is methanol and castor oil, with nitro-benzine, nitro-methane, or nitro-propane added. There are several ready-mixed proprietary brands of fuel. Diesel motors—mostly in the smallest models—use a mixture of ether, paraffin and castor.

The sleek Gordano might by now have managed the coveted three-figure speed (one club awards a 100-m.p.h. star) if it had not crashed and smashed up about six months ago. Walker had to rebuild it almost entirely. But as an all-British job it went overseas in October when Walker and six others represented Britain in a friendly visit to Sweden.

Now that he is back there are busy evenings in the workshop behind Clarendon Road, Cheshunt. Ten per cent more speed has to be found somehow. An ingenious test rig, with air-fan loading and a speedometer calibrated against track results, will record improvements.

Streamlining—removing headlamps and windscreen, and lowering the whole topworks—would probably do the trick, but at a cost of making the car a projectile instead of a replica. That would not suit John Walker.

"This car was built as a *model*," he says, "and it's going to remain one."

MARGO

by LANE STEPHENS

ILLUSTRATED BY HAROLD FORSTER

You didn't think of her as a ventriloquist's dummy. She seemed to be alive and breathing—and scheming

Dressing her was fun. Maurice had

PUBLIC MEMORY IS SHORT, so they say, but people still remember the music hall act, "Maurice and Margo," which delighted London in the uneasy years between the wars. Only yesterday someone asked me once again: "Whatever *did* happen to Maurice, Bess?"

But I am as much in the dark as anyone else. One night, fifteen years ago, he walked out of the theatre—and disappeared. All the hue and cry failed to find him then, so it's hardly likely that the mystery will be solved now.

I met him first in 1929, when we were both with the old "Spotlights" concert party. He was presenting a quite ordinary little ventriloquial turn in those days; the usual cross-talk stuff with the usual diminutive dummy dressed as a snottie and called, if I remember correctly, "Nelson."

But Maurice was full of ambition, even then. It glowed through everything that he did. He never doubted that he was destined for the top of the tree. "One of these days, Bess," he'd say, "I'm taking my act to London, and it's going to knock their eyes out. I'm working on something entirely new. It'll be a sensation—you'll see."

For a long time he didn't tell me any more than that. We did a "long stand" at the Pier Pavilion, Shorleigh, that summer, and Maurice was able to devote plenty of time to the perfection of his new act. By the end of August he confided that it was almost ready for a try-out.

Then one day, after the matinée, he asked me to his digs. He wanted, he said, to introduce me to Margo. He was full of suppressed excitement. Wondering, I accompanied him. He unlocked the door of his room and opened it with a triumphant flourish. "There you are, Bess—meet Margo!"

I gave a little scream. Lying stretched out on Maurice's bed was what I at first took to be a nude woman with a mass of wavy black hair. It was Maurice's great surprise—the life-sized puppet which had taken him months to make, and which was to be the central figure in his sensational new act.

"Maurice!" I cried, when I had recovered. "She's perfect. How in the world did you do it—what's she made of?"

He grinned, well pleased. "Oh, wood, leather, clay, papier maché—all sorts of things. Quite a girl, eh?" He patted his creation affectionately.

SHE was, indeed, quite a girl. Her limbs and body, perfectly moulded, were covered with soft, peach-coloured leather, a convincing simulation of flesh. She even had ten fingers complete with celluloid finger nails. Her legs were firm and beautifully shaped; not like Nelson's, which were just empty trouser legs with little boots fixed on.

The face was a triumph; daintily pink and white, with great long-lashed eyes. The two vertical lines running from mouth to chin, which a "vent doll" must have, to allow the mouth to open, were thread-like and almost invisible. The cupid-bow lips parted in a roguish smile when Maurice manipulated the strings. Flushed with pride, he took delight in showing her off and making her talk for me in a husky contralto.

"I want to try her out on Saturday night," he explained. "But not like this—it'd practically amount to an indecent performance! She must be dressed, but in what? I've sunk myself on producing her—that wig alone cost me a pretty penny at Clarkson's. I can't afford her any clothes, poor thing."

"She can have my red evening frock," I offered eagerly. "She's a bit slimmer than me, but I can make it fit——"

"It'll have to be opened at the back so that I can get at her works," warned Maurice. "It'll mess up the frock."

"Never mind—you can buy me another when you're famous," I told him gaily. "She'll want shoes, too. My red satin ones will do if we stuff paper in the toes. What else? Oh, yes, something underneath—leave it to me."

We had fun dressing Margo. She looked magnificent when we had finished. I drew her abundant hair into a low chignon and lent her a gold clip and bracelet to finish her off. She thanked me prettily in her husky drawl.

ON the Saturday night Margo made her début. Maurice hadn't told me what to expect. He was to come on immediately after the interval, so just before the curtain rose I slipped out front and took a vacant seat in the side aisle. I wouldn't have missed it for anything in the world.

The curtains parted on a stage lit only by one rose-shaded lamp. Margo reclined on a couch a little off-centre, apparently asleep. She looked real, in that light, even to me. Her skin glowed; I could have sworn she breathed. Daringly, Maurice allowed a full half-minute to elapse before he appeared at the back of the stage, immaculate in evening dress, and tip-toed towards the couch.

The act that followed was, in essentials, the same as the one you probably witnessed yourself a year or two later in the Josef White review *Ladybirds*. It was simply a long love scene; intimate, a little risqué, but devastatingly effective.

It culminated in a "duet" in which Maurice alternated his own light tenor voice with Margo's husky and suggestive contralto.

Then and there, as I sat watching a great act being born, I realized that it had been no idle boast when Maurice had sworn that he would get to the top. He'd got what it needed, and he was a master of stagecraft.

One word, one gesture too many and the whole scene would have slipped over the edge of fantasy into vulgarity. But Maurice didn't make that gesture, he didn't utter that word.

It was a startling moment when, at the end, the stage blazed into light and Maurice, grinning, sweating, yanked Margo from the couch and exposed her, limp and dangling, to the audience. A great gasp went up, followed by a second or two of dead silence. Then the applause came, in a shattering crescendo. It wasn't a full house by any means, the season was nearly over—but I'd never felt that old Pier Pavilion shake before!

What happened after that is theatrical history. Everyone in the profession knows how the Shorleigh local paper, having a spare half-column, filled it with a whole-hearted eulogy of Maurice's act. And how Rafe Gavin—*the* Rafe Gavin—heaved his twenty stone, his eyeglass and his nine-inch cigar from his office in Wardour Street and actually occupied a canvas chair in the Shorleigh Pier Pavilion to see for himself the unknown ventriloquist who called himself Maurice. And how, in the February of 1930, "Maurice and Margo" made their London début at the old Royal Princes Theatre.

Maurice had sworn to "knock their eyes out," and he did it—heavens, he did it! By the end of the year there were Margo dolls and Margo dresses and Margo make-up. Margo gave interviews to reporters, and her opinions on life, love and fashion appeared in all the glossy magazines. She obeyed a royal summons and appeared at a Command Performance. She even launched a liner. She was *the* pin-up girl of 1930.

And Maurice? He remained the same friendly, unassuming, rather naïve person he had always been. For a time our careers ran side by side. I appeared in many of the same shows. Due to his influence I even had a modest part in the famous *Ladybirds* review. It was during that phenomenal run that I introduced Maurice to Lolly Mathews.

Lolly and I had been friends, in a desultory sort of way, for years. She was a photographer's model, and hated it, or so she said. She insisted that her real ambition in life was to settle down with some nice man into peaceful domesticity. That should have been easy enough, for Lolly had a cameo face, raven hair and a figure to write home about. She hadn't, it was true, overmuch intelligence, but if you looked like Lolly that didn't matter.

IT was love at first sight. I knew it the minute they shook hands, and my heart sank. I liked Lolly well enough, but I wasn't blind to her faults, and I didn't think she was the right sort of person for Maurice. But it was none of my business, and it wasn't a thing you could stop, anyway. I could only stand by and watch it all happening, and hope for the best.

Within three months I was a witness to their marriage at Caxton Hall. I've still got the photograph I clipped out of the evening paper; Maurice looks as proud as a peacock, and Lolly like the cat that at last has got her paws into the cream.

They didn't have a honeymoon. *Ladybirds* was still running; it looked like running for ever, but Maurice promised Lolly a trip to Italy when it was over.

They took a cosy little flat in Field Street, just off Piccadilly. I went there quite often, those first months. They seemed happy enough. Lolly was obviously enjoying herself. She loved pottering round her tiny kitchen in a frilly apron, playing the rôle of "perfect little wife" for all she was worth. I've always been a rover, and the domestic scene has little or no appeal for me, and after a time I began to make excuses when they asked me to the flat.

I saw Maurice at the theatre, of course, but never alone, and only for a minute or two at a time. Then, one night, early in the New Year, he came round to my dressing-room after the show.

"Come and have a bite of supper with me, Bess," he invited.

I looked up at him, surprised; we hadn't been out together since his marriage. He looked white without his make-up and rather strained. "I want

o cut the back of the frock to operate the works, but she looked wonderful

your advice," he urged, as I hesitated. "Please, Bess—I've got to talk to somebody or burst."

"All right," I said. He waited outside while I finished changing, and we went to a little all-night café near the theatre.

"It's—it's Lolly," he blurted out directly we were settled. "She wants me to pack up the act."

I hadn't expected that.

"Maurice, she can't!" I gasped. "Not now when you're doing so well! In Heaven's name, why?"

He shrugged. "She's been on at me for weeks now. When *Ladybirds* comes off she wants me to go into partnership with her brother—help run his blasted agency—I ask you!"

I was shocked into silence. Maurice to give up now, at the height of his career, and waste his time in a footling little theatrical agency—it was unthinkable!

He reached across the table and gripped my hand.

"Bess—I can't do it—not even for Lolly." There were tears in his eyes. "I've worked hard for years to get where I am—you know that, Bess. You know what those miserable little concert parties were like; hardly any money, dingy lodgings, makeshift props . . . all the time I promised myself something better. Now I've got it at last, and Lolly——" his voice broke, "Lolly says she doesn't want an actor for a husband!"

"Rubbish!" I said angrily. "She knew you were an actor when she married you!"

"That's just it. I can't help thinking there's more to it than that. But what, God knows! Bess. . . . I—I wondered if you'd go and see her, sometime when I'm not there; talk to her. You're her friend. I can't do anything with her. We can't talk without rowing these days and I'm sick and tired of it."

RIGHT from the start I wasn't very keen on the idea. I didn't see what possible good I could do, but I hated to see Maurice so upset and unlike himself. In the end I let him persuade me. The following Sunday afternoon I went up to the flat to see Lolly.

Her appearance shocked me. She looked even more drawn and ill than Maurice had done. Her face wasn't made up and she wore an old, unbecoming frock.

"I suppose Maurie's told you?" she greeted me.

I nodded. She turned away and lit a cigarette. Her hands were trembling. "Well, don't you think it's a good idea?"

"No, Lolly," I said bluntly, "I don't, and if you say it is then you're either lying or crazy."

I hadn't meant to put it like that, of course. I'd made up my mind to be everything that was sweet and tactful, but her manner rattled me.

"I might have known you'd side with him," she sneered. "You always have."

I let her have it then, straight from the shoulder. I told her just what sort of selfish little cat I thought she was; I told her that Maurice was a fine man and that she was damned lucky to have got him—I believe I even dragged in that old cliché about her not being fit to black his boots! For good measure I told her a few things she didn't know about Maurice's early struggles, piling it on good and thick.

"And now he's managed to get somewhere at last," I finished, "you want him to throw it up, just because you're jealous of his success!"

LOLLY heard me out without a word, her face white and pitiful without its make-up. If I hadn't been so mad I could have been sorry for her. When I stopped, breathless, she crumpled up on the settee and burst into tears.

"I'm not jealous of Maurie's success," she wailed. "It's not that at all."

"Then what is it?" I demanded.

She faced me, taut and quivering. I could see that, like Maurice, she'd got to talk or burst.

"All right, Bess—I'll tell you." She drew a shuddering breath and sat up straight. "I'm no more jealous of his success than you are, but—but I'm not playing second fiddle to a puppet! There!"

It took a minute or two for that to sink in. When I got it I wanted to laugh. Margo—Lolly was jealous of Margo! It was the most fantastic thing I had ever heard. I could have understood it if she had been jealous of her husband's success, his popularity; some natures are like that. I could have sympathized if she had been jealous of some other woman, myself, even—but this!

She grabbed at my hands. "Don't laugh, Bess—please don't laugh. If you knew how miserable I've been." She gulped back a sob. "I know it sounds mad, horrible, but it's true. Maurie thinks more of that awful dummy than he does of me and I can't stand it."

I sat down on the settee beside her.

"Lolly, you've got this thing all out of perspective. Why, Maurice thinks the world of you, he always has."

She shook her head. "Not any more. You don't understand, Bess. Nobody could." She lowered her voice. "It's unnatural, horrible, but I believe he's in love with Margo!"

I did laugh then, I couldn't help it.

"Oh, Lolly! In love with a puppet of wood and leather—an effigy that he made himself?"

"That's just it—*because* he made it himself. He created her, and now he loves her. You don't know what he's like these days. He's always talking to her, fondling her. . . . He won't keep her shut up in her box as he used to. When he's at home she sits on this settee all the time, even when—even when he makes love to me. . . . Sometimes I get the feeling that she *is* real, that she's got some horrible secret life of her own. I could scream when I see her sitting there, always between us, watching . . . sneering."

Ridiculous as the whole thing was, it was clear that Lolly was nearing the end of her tether. I knew Lolly; she would have fought tooth and nail to vanquish a flesh-and-blood rival, but this unhealthy obsession on Maurice's part, whether real or imaginary, had defeated her.

I did what I could; told her to pull herself together and not let her imagination run away with her; but in the end I did promise to do what I could to get him to change his act, dispense with Margo and introduce some other kind of dummy. Even as I promised, I was pretty sure it would be hopeless, but it seemed to pacify Lolly, and I left her powdering her nose and looking more like herself.

Maurice's reaction was just what I had expected. "Get rid of Margo—are you crazy?" he said when I tackled him next day. "Without Margo there wouldn't be any act—dammit, she *is* the act!"

"You could get another dummy," I suggested weakly.

"Not like Margo. There isn't another dummy in the world like Margo. She's unique. Why should I get another, anyway?"

He was suddenly furious. "I see what it is — you're siding with Lolly over this! It's just another scheme to get me out. Well, you can tell her from me that it won't work. I'm *not* getting out, and as long as I'm in the profession it's going to be 'Maurice and Margo.' Get that—both of you!"

So that was all the good I did. I've often wondered since if there was anything I could have done or said that would have averted the final catastrophe. The thought has nagged at me for fifteen years, but I shall never know now.

That night I did something I hadn't done since that long-ago Saturday night in the Pier Pavilion at Shorleigh. I went "out front" and saw Maurice's act from the stalls. At least, I saw the beginning of it.

The act was substantially the same—brought up to date, of course, more slickly sophisticated, for it was 1935 now, and infinitely better dressed; Maurice faultlessly tailored, and Margo's gown—specially made by a famous fashion house—glittering with sequins.

But there was a difference, apart from these superficialities. Or perhaps I conjured it up in the light of what Lolly had told me. I don't know. I only know that I felt physically sick as I watched Maurice bending over Margo and heard the drawling voice saying: "I love you, Maurice. You're mine, mine, I'll never let you go."

AND then, it seemed to me that the dainty, leather-covered hand tightened possessively on Maurice's shoulder, and that the face, for that brief moment, was no longer the blank face of a puppet, but that of a living, breathing woman, the expression gloating and horrible, the lips greedy. The voice, too, sounded different, strange, not like Maurice's usual "thrown" contralto.

The whole effect was weird, repulsive. I could not bear to watch it, and I stumbled from my seat before the end, feeling sick and shaken.

When I got backstage I found Lolly waiting in my dressing-room. She'd been crying, and looked as if she hadn't slept for a week.

"Maurie's gone!" she announced tragically.

"Gone?"

"He's left me. We had an awful scene last night. I came out in the open and told him if he didn't get rid of Margo I'd—I'd destroy her myself! He went so white that I thought he was going to faint." Lolly began to cry again. "He—he said if I felt like that the best thing he could do was get out, and he went off to some hotel, and took

that—that *thing* with him! Oh, Bess, I'm so miserable. What am I going to do?"

There wasn't anything much I could say to Lolly, so I just advised her to go home and leave things alone for a day or two; maybe Maurice would think it over and change his mind.

But like most people who ask for advice, it didn't suit Lolly when she got it. She'd already decided to see Maurice that night and make a last appeal to him. I knew that if she went to his dressing-room in her present mood she would only make things worse, but she wouldn't listen to me. In the end she turned on me in a fury and accused me of wanting their marriage to crack up because I was in love with Maurice myself.

She flounced out, white with anger and misery. I presume she went straight along to Maurice.

It was getting late, and I sat down and began to take off my make-up. When I had finished I sat for a long time staring into the mirror. Vaguely I heard the roar of applause that meant the end of the show, heard the artists come clattering back to their dressing-rooms.

I didn't seem to have the energy to move. I kept wondering what was happening in that other dressing-room along the passage.

I was roused by old Griggs, the janitor, on his nightly prowl. He poked his head in the door and started when he saw me.

"Oh—beg yer pardon, miss. I thought you'd gone. I was going to switch the lights off—it's after twelve, miss."

"Is it really, Griggs? I'm sorry. I'll get out now. Is—is Mr. Maurice still in the theatre?"

"Oh, no, miss—'im and the lady left 'arf an hour ago."

"Together?"

"Yes, miss—I called a taxi for them. I don't think the lady was well, miss. Mr. Maurice 'ad to 'arf carry 'er down the steps."

Trust Lolly, I thought, to pile on the agony; still she and Maurice had evidently made up their quarrel, so that was something.

Relieved, I followed Griggs out into the passage. He was still talking. "Mr. Maurice must 'ave been right put out about the lady, miss—'e went off and left 'is dummy be'ind. Never known 'im do that before—proper fussy about that dummy, 'e is as a rule. Still, it'll be safe enough tucked up in its box." He chuckled. "Looks like a proper coffin, does that 'ole box o' Mr. Maurice's."

I stopped short, feeling as though I had suddenly waded into icy water; the presentiment that I had felt all evening suddenly crystallized into actual fear.

"Griggs," I said breathlessly, "have you got a key to Mr. Maurice's dressing-room?"

"Y-yes, miss, I've got a pass key, but——"

I almost pushed the protesting janitor along the passage, and waited in a fever of dreadful anticipation while he groped for the key and unlocked the door.

Heaven knows what I expected to see, but everything was as usual. The make-up table was neat and orderly and Maurice's scarlet dressing-gown hung tidily behind the door. Yes, everything peaceful and normal . . . but I had to be sure. . . .

The oblong black dummy case stood on the floor by the long mirror. It was made of wood and belted with leather straps for easy carrying. It was, as Griggs had remarked, very like a coffin.

Telling myself I was acting like a fool, I drew a deep breath, and bending down lifted the lid of the box. Just one look and I staggered back, half-fainting. "Oh, God! Oh, God!" I whispered. And it was a prayer, and not a blasphemy.

For Maurice's box had become a coffin in actual fact. This was no painted puppet. It was Lolly, a waxen, lifeless Lolly, with staring eyes and ugly purple bruises ringing her white throat.

However long I live I shall never forget that nightmare moment, or the days and weeks of suspense that followed it: the ghastly ordeal of telling my story and being questioned and cross-questioned till I was half-demented; the draughty coroner's court, and the couple from the flat below Lolly and Maurice in Field Street, telling convincingly—and spitefully—of constant quarrels, threats; clearest of all I shall remember being sickened, soon after the coroner's verdict, by the sight of Maurice's photograph smiling at me from a notice board and bearing the caption: "Wanted for Murder."

It seemed that everybody but myself was convinced that Maurice had murdered Lolly and then run away with another woman. This in spite of the fact that, apart from Griggs's story, there wasn't a shred of evidence that there had ever been another woman. But the janitor stuck to it that Maurice had left the theatre that night with a woman—a half-fainting woman—and nothing would shake him.

And they never found Maurice. I'd prayed that they wouldn't, and they didn't. Gradually the hunt slackened off. "The Puppet Murder," as the newspapers called it, went down in the annals of crime as yet another unsolved mystery, and so it remains to this day.

Officially unsolved, perhaps—but I know what I think.

It's fantastic, if you like, but then the whole thing was fantastic. I believe that Maurice, like Frankenstein, created something that got beyond his control.

That Maurice was a murderer I absolutely refuse to believe. Remember, I'd known him for years, worked with him, played with him. I knew him better perhaps than anyone else in the world, and I repeat, he was incapable of murder. And in all the welter of horror and suspicion and circumstantial evidence one indisputable fact remains which upholds me in my conviction.

They said that whoever strangled Lolly wore gloves. Well, Maurice never wore gloves; he couldn't bear the feel of them on his hands, even for a moment. It was almost a phobia with him.

But I can't help remembering Margo's long, leather-covered fingers with their varnished, celluloid nails. . . .

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Signposts

A NEW district is springing up near my home. And new signposts now point to old haunts.

Somehow these signposts don't work very well yet. Follow them blindly and you may loose your way. It's better to balance one's own knowledge against their proffered help.

I think this policy should be applied to present day living as a whole. The old ways are disappearing. But the eager guides to the new ways are not infallible. One can easily go astray unless enthusiasm is tempered with knowledge and sound thought.

The old signposts of life have virtues we should not despise, just as the new ones have possibilities we should not fear. It would be wise to cherish the one while exploring the other.

by ROFFE THOMPSON

Odds are against the would-be dictators

by HERBERT HODGE

HOW OLD DO YOU HAVE to be, I wonder, before you stop wanting to look ahead into the future, and start looking back longingly towards the past?

Whatever that age may be, I haven't yet reached it. Although I've learned not to worry too much about my own future, I still enjoy reading other people's speculations about what the world's going to be like in the years to come—especially when they can tell a good tale.

When I was younger, William Morris's *News From Nowhere* was one of my favourites. Dreaming of the future London, Morris tells of a Thames so pure that you can catch salmon under Hammersmith Bridge; and a people so perfect that they've learned to get along without either police or politics. They use the old parliament buildings for storing manure.

To my mind the most attractive place in Morris's London is his tobacconist's shop. The hero walks in and gets a pouchful of his favourite tobacco just for the asking. The only thing the girl behind the counter worries about is whether he's quite sure he's got enough.

Money has been abolished. The tobacco tax, of course, has gone with it. So have commercialism, world trade and mass production.

People have learned to live very simply. They grow what they need to eat; and they make the few other things they need by hand. So the whole country has become a beautiful garden, inhabited by a community of gardeners, artists and craftsmen.

It's certainly a glorious dream. The only thing Morris forgot to take into account, it seems to me, was the eternal cussedness of human nature, which drives so many of us to strive most for what we need least—particularly power, prestige and possessions. Besides, Morris wrote before the invention of radio. Writers who've written since are much less optimistic.

Dream Into Nightmare

I've just been reading George Orwell's idea of the future: *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Orwell takes all the cussedness of human nature into account, particularly our desire for personal power, and turns the old Utopian dream into a nightmare.

He shows us a political party whose leaders see all human history as a struggle for power; with each ruling group being sooner or later pushed out of power by the group below it. These chaps (in the year 1984) have finally solved the problem of how to keep the power once you've got it.

Of course, the answer's very simple. All you've got to do is to stop everybody from thinking. But no ruling group up to now has ever quite succeeded in doing that.

George Orwell's rulers solve the problem by supplying everyone with a free radio and television set. But each set has two drawbacks—from the citizen's point of view. One drawback is that you can't switch it off. It keeps on talking all day long, giving off continual propaganda from the Ministry of Truth.

The other drawback is in the television screen, fixed into the wall of every room. This television works two ways—so that the Thought Police can always see and hear anything you do or say, whenever they care to tune in to you from their headquarters at the Ministry of Love. You daren't even let a dissatisfied expression appear on your face, for fear they catch you at it. This is "face-crime," proving you're guilty of "thought-crime." The punishment is vaporization.

Put briefly, like that, it may sound quite impossible. But the way George Orwell develops his little nightmare makes it seem all too probable. His hero works at the Ministry of Truth, where they fake the history books and even the old copies of the newspapers, so as to prove the Government has never made a mistake.

Manual workers, or "proles," don't count as human beings in this new State, so the Thought Police don't bother with them. They are kept more or less contented with the excitements of a weekly gamble in the State lotteries and plenty of pornographic stories, written by machinery.

A War When Restive

Whenever they get a bit restive the Government turns on a little war and stages a hate week, during which everybody can work off his accumulated bad feeling by denouncing the enemy. There are now only three great states in the world and the rulers of each realize that the best way to keep their people loyal and patriotic is to be continually at war with each other. But there's a tacit agreement not to use the atom bomb in case that puts them all out of power.

Meanwhile, the rations steadily get less and less. Everybody works harder and harder, and gets poorer and poorer—except, of course, the men in power.

Well, that's George Orwell's little dream; and a very convincing one, too—if you see life through his eyes, with the middle-class "intellectuals" as the only group that matters; the only group on which our freedom depends.

But I don't believe the manual workers are quite such mugs as Orwell seems to think. Abraham Lincoln saw into the mind of the manual worker much more clearly when he said: "You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all the time, but you can't fool all the people all of the time."

If it's true that a sucker is born every minute, then I think it must be equally true that a doubter is born at least every hour. In this matter of birth there is no distinction of class. And so long as doubters continue to be born I don't think would-be dictators will ever have things entirely their own way.

All the same, they certainly need watching—no matter what party they belong to.

MY LIFE (11) by WILFRED PICKLES

How "Have a go!" began

Interviewing ordinary folk away from the studio: that was the appeal the idea had for me. To kick off, we chose a small place in my own Yorkshire

"Coom on, lass." Persuasive Pickles at Wigan. The first *Have a Go!* series brought in moving letters

IN THE COMFORTABLE lounge of his new home in Didsbury, Manchester, John Salt, Programme Director of the B.B.C. North Region, a happy family man with two children, sat back in the armchair opposite me and developed his idea. "It's astonishingly simple really, but I feel it will be good," he said. Then he built up the programme for me.

It was to be a quiz in which I would give money away for correct answers to three or four questions. John said: "I think you're the very man for it, Wilfred. I heard how successful you were with your Civil Defence quiz shows. I want to get away from scripted programmes, to find something spontaneous. We must get out and about, visit a different place each week. . . ."

"And interview ordinary folks," I said, becoming more and more interested.

"Ordinary folks most certainly," John replied.

John then brought up the question of a producer for the quiz and asked me if I would like to work with Philip Robinson. I remembered Philip from my early days of broadcasting in plays from Leeds and I knew he had done a fine job as a news reader on the Overseas Service in London during the war.

One Thing We Disagreed On

The first of John's suggestions with which I could not agree was his idea to use a band to play the tunes during the show. "If the person we are quizzing can't guess the tune, there's going to be a mighty mess when we try to get the band to stop and restart in unison," I said. John was convinced, however, that a band was indispensable and that it would not "clutter up the programme," as I felt it would.

We talked for hours and by the time Mabel and I waved goodbye to John and his wife, Olive, as they stood at their garden gate, our plans were laid and both he and I knew just what we wanted.

The next move came a week later when I went to meet Philip Robinson and Jack Jordan, a pianist and leader of a small orchestra. It was clear that the two of them had been doing some hard thinking about the programme, but I was surprised when they said they had decided on a title. They were bursting to tell me what it was.

"Well, out with it," I urged.

"*Quiz Bang,*" said Philip.

"*Quiz Bang!*" I repeated, horrified. There was a gaping silence. It seemed our new castle had been demolished by a bomb. "I'm sorry," I said. "I'm sorry, but I won't appear in any programme called *Quiz Bang.*"

Again there was silence until Philip said: "All right, then, can you think of a title?" Where it came from I don't know, but it was out like a flash. "*Have a Go, Joe!*" I said.

The two of them savoured the suggestion for a few moments. They then agreed and Jordan

Pickles in Christmas Day broadcast from Children's Hospital, Bradford. "Very young listeners wrote fascinating, delightful essays about me"

went off to work on the signature tune which was to catch on with the listeners while remaining quite unintelligible to most of them.

As we had arranged, we made a trial recording at Bradford. I enjoyed every moment of it. I loved talking to the simple, down-to-earth people who volunteered to come up to the "mike," and while I was delighted I was not at all surprised to find real gems of natural unsophisticated humour and expressions of a kindly philosophy coming from them.

Back in the studios we played over the recording, altered points of presentation and decided to venture out on the real thing.

We chose Bingley, a small industrial community in Yorkshire.

Again that mixture of humour and seriousness characterized the show; the folks were frank, friendly and quite frolicsome, and I found that once I had induced them to forget the "mike" they were merely themselves. And that was what we wanted.

I knew immediately how right we had been not to produce the programme in the studios. The people were on their own doorstep, so that the programme became a family affair. Everybody in the audience knew the volunteers and that created a vivid partisan spirit.

Local folks were up there giving Wilfred Pickles as much as he gave them—and more—and the applause that greeted most remarks was an expression of congratulation to a member of the family in his moment of achievement and in admiration of his courage in facing up to questions at the microphone.

That is why the applause on many of our programmes is exaggerated, though I do all in my power to keep it to a minimum.

"Joe" Was Dropped

From Bingley we went on to Huddersfield, Sheffield, Chesterfield, Wallasey, and a dozen more towns and villages. *Have a Go, Joe!* was recorded in women's institutes, canteens, collieries, church halls and workshops for the blind.

And the listeners liked it. It was talked about in Broadcasting House, London; and Tom Chalmers, shrewd and watchful head of the Light programme, presently decided to make it a national feature. It was at this point that "Joe" was expelled as redundant.

Meanwhile, Walter Greenwood was still pressing me to join *The Cure for Love* on tour, and finally we worked out a scheme whereby Philip Robinson would fit in the recordings of *Have a Go!* at places within easy distance of towns where I would be appearing with the touring company.

The only member left of the original London cast, I remembered most of the movements and inflections that had crept into the London production but which were not according to H. K. Ayliff's initial directions. During the rehearsals for the tour I interrupted Ayliff to remind him about them. "Excuse me, H. K., but Charles Victor and I used to cross over here," I said in the middle of one rehearsal.

"Yes, yes," Ayliff murmured impatiently.

Two minutes later I again stopped the proceedings. "Excuse me, but Charles did an especially good movement here and I——"

"Yes, yes," came Ayliff's rejoinder.

Ayliff's Rejoinder

He put up with my interventions for about three-quarters of an hour. Then as the rest of the company stood about the stage and I leaned over the footlights, he said: "Excuse me, but would you mind telling me where you and Charles papered the ceiling!"

Ayliff was renowned for his witty come-backs, and nearly every time I returned home between rehearsals I had a new Ayliff story to recount to Mabel, who was invariably busy typing letters. Ever since our first meeting she had been my mentor, but now she had become business manager and private secretary as well.

Fan mail had started to pour in by every post and, while we knew we could pass most of the letters to the B.B.C., we felt that a formal official answer was not enough. If folks had the decency and the interest to write, apart from the trouble they went to in buying a stamp and going out to the post-box, they at least deserved an equally personal answer signed by me.

So Mabel had bought a portable typewriter. Slowly at first and then with increasing speed she had picked out the keys until she had become so proficient as to be able to deal with up to thirty letters in an evening.

But, with *Have a Go!* capturing the public fancy, my fan mail had now leapt to between five and six hundred letters a week. It represented a very full-time job and was clearly too big a task for Mabel to cope with on top of her usual work, so we engaged two secretaries and converted the lounge of our home in Manchester, already stripped of furniture to furnish the London flat, into an office. Mabel, however, still answered the more urgent correspondence. Whenever I could snatch a few moments I would catch up with reading the pile of letters myself: they were fascinating and I enjoyed the variety of style, tone and opinion. They came from old folks and very young children, ex-Servicemen, teachers and tailors.

They were written in the studies of impressive homes and in the living-rooms of prefabs, by lords and labourers and knights and "knocker-uppers." Some of the writing was copperplate, some an indecipherable scrawl.

Those letters, simple, straightforward and sincere, formed for Mabel and me a splendid pageant of British life and gave us a unique insight into human nature and a chance to understand the fundamental decency and friendliness of ordinary people the world over.

Many of the letters told deeply moving stories and I present some of them here merely to show what effect this very human programme was having on the thoughts and actions of our listeners. Among them was this beautifully expressed piece from Jeanette Linkova, living in Czechoslovakia:

"Doubtless you receive many letters thanking you for your programmes of homely fun. I at first hesitated to write, as I wondered if you would ever read the letter. But on second thoughts I took up my pen to say 'thank you.'

"I listen to you and the people you introduce with mixed feelings. Laughter comes spontaneously, yet tears are close behind. Maybe this is always so. I try to join in the songs, but always my voice breaks and no sound comes.

"Since I came here I have fought against homesickness. I stay because I feel my duty lies here. I married a Czech in the war, we lived in London till 1944 when a V.1 hit our home and killed my husband and best friends. I came here in 1945 with my baby son. . . .

"Thank you for your programme. You bring the earthy, natural, simple humour of the British people to a remote Czech village."

How fascinating and delightful were the notes and essays from the children! One little girl of six wrote this at school and it was sent to me by her mother:

"I like Wilfred Pickles because he is nice. If he would come to live with me I would like him to put his feet on my hot water bottle and I would give him some bacon and some tea and buy him some new clothes."

Obviously they were all the things she liked herself—and she honoured me by offering to give me a share!

A batch of letters came in from a children's hospital after the matron had told the youngsters that some money which had reached the hospital had been raised following my *Children's Hour* appeal for invalid and crippled children which brought in £8,000.

One wrote:

"My name is Jane. I am ten years old. I have got a T.B. hip and have had two operations and I am in plaster. I have been in hospital nearly six years. . . .

"The things I like best in the world are birds, animals and all living creatures. The birds are very tame and they will even hop on our beds and start chirping for bread and they take it out of our hands. I hate people who are cruel to birds, don't you?"

A Leicester old age pensioner sent these words: "My wife is seventy-five years of age and after working for over sixty years, and over sixty years' social and religious work, has had two seizures and now has a useless leg, arm and badly affected speech.

"I would like you to see her face as your name is mentioned. It lights up with eager expectation and she calls out, 'Let's have a go' before you do.

"It is worth more than the licence fee to see her so happy. 'Turn on the radio. You know Wilfred starts very punctual.' That has just been called out to me."

My Blunt Critic

One northerner was typically blunt: "Young man, you're in t'wrong job. Why don't you get out of this broadcasting and get into something that suits you better? I must admit I've listened and I don't like you."

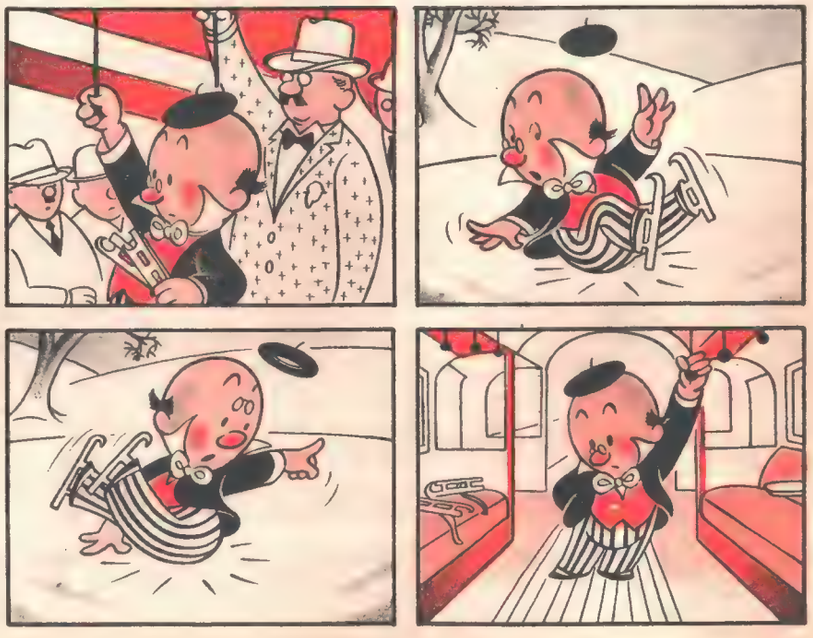
Mabel and I worked out a reply which she typed. It read: "I am sorry you don't like me but one day perhaps I will do something you will like. As I am broadcasting next Tuesday, I wonder if you would care to listen and let me have your reactions."

The broadcast was made as planned, Wednesday went by and on Thursday among the mail was an envelope we recognized. Eagerly I tore it open.

"Dear Wilfred," he wrote, "Well, I listened—and I still don't like thee!"

NEXT WEEK: I go all out for that homely touch

MR. DIMPLE *by David Hand*



I'm standing for Parliament

by R. J. MINNEY

At the first hurdle I was "inspected." The second hurdle —my actual adoption as candidate—was stiff, because six of us were in the running. The third was even stiffer—my début on a soapbox at a street corner. Now I'm busy canvassing from door to door, which is full of surprises

IT WAS A BITTER January night and I just managed to get a seat in the crowded train. I was about to attend a meeting.

Southend, hitherto returning one Member of Parliament, had now been split into two, and all the trade unions, the Co-operative Society and other affiliated organizations within the new division had been invited by the local Labour Party to send in names of possible candidates to contest the additional seat at the General Election.

I was that evening to be inspected for this purpose by the Southend branch of the National Union of Railwaymen. I wondered, as the train swayed through the gathering fog, what sort of questions I would be asked during the interview.

When I reached the hall I found the members grouped round the radiator. They glanced at me pleasantly and made room.

As the members began to take their seats, I went to a young man occupying the chair and introduced myself. He shook my hand warmly and asked me to be seated. Then he proceeded with the normal business of the branch. After that the members were told the purpose of my visit. I was asked if I would rise and tell them something about myself.

I was surprised. The facts about myself had already been supplied in writing and I had expected merely to be asked questions.

I spoke briefly. Questions followed, and I gathered from what was said that I was not the first to come before them for this purpose. I was asked when I had joined the party, why I was standing for Parliament and if I could spare the time for the work in the event of my being elected.

The vote was taken in my presence. I was relieved that not a hand went up against me. I was asked to sign papers accepting nomination.

Searching Questions

That was the first hurdle. The second was more formidable, for other unions had also sent in nominations, and the constituency party had six candidates in all from which to make its final choice. The executive invited all six of us along together so that we should be weeded down to a more manageable size for the general council's eventual selection.

We waited in a little room on a cold Sunday afternoon. There were about a dozen men and women in the adjacent room, drawn from the various wards and districts, the affiliated unions and the Co-op. in the Parliamentary Division. Again I had to make a speech about myself. But this time the questions were even more searching.

After carefully examining all six of us, the executive found our merits and qualities so evenly matched that it decided after all to leave the full choice to the general council. The meeting was fixed for the afternoon of the following Saturday. The moment I arrived I was taken by the arm and hustled into the hall as the man in front of me (we were ranged alphabetically, I think) had not yet turned up.

Race Against Bell

When I found myself in a large, unfamiliar room, filled with sixty or more delegates, their faces dim blurs of pink in the blue haze of pipe and cigarette smoke, my uneasiness was greatly accentuated. The chairman shook me by the hand.

"You have ten minutes," he said. "We shall have to limit you strictly to that, because of the number we have to interview this afternoon. When the ten minutes are up I shall strike this bell and I expect you to stop at once. I am allowing a further ten minutes for questions."

On the advice of friends who had been through this vital stage of adoption in various parts of the country, I had prepared my address to last exactly fifteen minutes. Something would have to go from it. But

Minney, prospective M.P., addresses constituents—"very different from pleasant art of after-dinner speaking"

Minney goes canvassing. "I've already seen 1,000 people in their homes"

what? I hadn't a moment to think: in a second or two I would be on my feet.

I decided to leave out all the adjectives, most of the verbs, and race through the speech, for all the facts seemed important to me. I was in full flight on the last lap when the bell sounded. With the sentence unfinished, I had to sit down.

Questions followed. I was out of the room in twenty minutes and the man whose place I had taken was brought in instead. After we had all been heard, the council and the candidates adjourned to the adjoining hall for tea. We were kept apart in a group by ourselves.

As the council assembled for the ballot, we six stood together in the passage outside, our ears cocked for what we might hear as the door opened and shut. The only name I did not hear, as the ballot papers were counted, was my own.

A Second Ballot

An official came out at last. He said the voting had been very close, but four of the candidates, just below the rest, had been eliminated. The four names were then called. I waited for mine. It didn't come. "There'll be a second ballot in a moment," the official said, "and I'll let you know which of you two has won."

I walked up to my rival and held out my hand. "We might as well wish each other luck," I said.

He was as dazed as I. "Good luck," he said, gripping my hand. We waited without speaking. The four who had been eliminated waited with us,

At last the official appeared again. He was flushed and breathless. "It's most extraordinary," he said. "Nothing like this has ever happened before. You've both received exactly the same number of votes. It has been decided that you should both come in again and speak for five minutes each, with five minutes more for further questioning. Will you come in first?" he said to my companion, who was alphabetically in front of me.

I paced up and down the passage, wondering what to say. . . .

When I mounted the platform I said that nothing could have been more democratic than what we had witnessed; but in choosing between us they must not imagine they were selecting their Member of Parliament. That goal could only be attained by the candidate who was able to sway the large body of men and women who had votes but no political anchorage. They were the people who would decide whether "you have a Tory to represent you or your own Labour M.P."

I was asked many quick and searching questions—but not how much money I was prepared to contribute to the election funds. None of us, I learned later, was asked this question.

We waited outside for the result of the third ballot. After what seemed an interminable time we were both summoned in together. Still in a state of suspense, we mounted the platform. The chairman rose and faced us. "You couldn't both be lucky," he said. "One of you has to be disappointed. The candidate selected is Mr. Minney."

I was aware of a glow of satisfaction and a vague consciousness that somebody was saying to me: "You realize that from now on your life won't be your own any more?"

The next morning the chairman of the central Southend Labour Party took me on a tour of the constituency. It consists of about a third of Southend—everything east of the pier—takes in Thorpe Bay (very Tory), Shoeburyness (about half and half) and a large rural area of about eighty-eight square miles stretching northward to the River Crouch and eastward to the tiny island of Foulness on the North Sea. The rural area is part of the old South-East Essex constituency and has, at the moment, a Labour M.P., Captain Ray Gunter.

When my adoption was announced in the Press I noticed a marked change in the attitude of many of my acquaintances. They had known for a long time that I had what they regarded as strange Leftist views. They could not understand it, but they were prepared to make some allowance for individual eccentricity.

It was, however, a much more serious matter that I was going to fight for my political beliefs. Some of them stopped calling and asking me to their homes. One hostess, who had been more persistent than the others in asking me around, because my link with films had brought me some limelight, now ostentatiously turned her back on me in the street and, with a toss of her head, crossed briskly to the opposite pavement.

The adoption marked the successful surmounting of the second hurdle. I was now faced with the third—the most difficult of all. I discovered, when I began my speaking tour of the constituency, that making political speeches is a very different thing from addressing groups of students at a university or engaging in the pleasant art of after-dinner speaking, which is all I had hitherto done.

But I find my audiences earnest and practical, aware that the policy put forward is likely to affect their standard of living, their jobs, the welfare of their children. The questions they ask, as they should be, are blunt and searching.

There is always, of course, a section of the audience which is inclined to be hostile. At one of my meetings, a father and son, both Conservatives, popped up and down alternately, finding new facets to a question they felt sure was unanswerable. At another meeting a man who began by saying "I only want to ask one question" went on to ask no fewer than twenty-eight!

Gladys Hughes, secretary of the local party, is a girl of great ability and experience who worked Southend as a sub-agent during the 1945 election. She knows, in consequence, not only each ward and district but the organizers and workers on whom she can rely. I was glad when it was decided she would be the agent.

A Girl, A Pram, A Dog

The first of my open-air meetings was mercifully arranged in a quiet district. I would be spared the hurly-burly of a Southend street roaring with traffic. None the less, I was uneasy. There were no walls, no platform, no table. At a fork in the roadway, by a small patch of grass, three of my organizers awaited my arrival. For audience there was a girl with a pram, and a dog on a lead.

The chairman stood on a box and introduced me. Three men riding along the road on bicycles stopped to listen. I was relieved the gathering was so small. But it kept growing, and by the time I had done I was told there were fifty-four people there, some squatting on the grass, others leaning against a public telephone box, others against a telegraph pole.

This meeting proved to me that I need no longer rely on notes. It marked the real beginning of my progress as a speaker. Later I spoke in busier streets in Southend, without even a box to stand on. This, I found, offers temptation to dogs to play hide-and-seek around your legs. One darted between mine while I was speaking and as the other followed I gripped it lightly with my calves. I released it as soon as it began to growl. I cannot recommend this as conducive to continuity of thought.

There are, in all, about 10,000 houses in my constituency. If it were possible in the time that remains until the General Election, I should like to visit all of them. I have already seen more than a thousand people in their homes. I am usually accompanied on these rounds by someone from the district who can act as guide and appear to vouch for me by his presence. We ring or knock on the front door. If there is no reply we slip round to the back. I have found as a rule that if the back door is opened, the people are sympathetic and welcoming.

Occasionally I've had the door shut on me by someone who has said, "Not interested." Once a man called down the front steps to his wife: "You know I'm a strict Communist. What d'you want to talk to him for?"

At another house, trying the back door after getting no answer at the front, I heard a stirring inside and waited. There was the tinkling of a glass, then some footsteps and slowly the door opened. In it stood an old man drawing on his coat. When I told him I was the prospective Labour candidate his face spread in a pleased smile and he held out his hand. "Come in," he said, "and I'll take my teeth out again and be comfortable."

The Film Fan Sisters

One evening a dark, vividly pretty girl, who opened the door to me, did not answer my greeting. Instead she turned to continue an argument with her sister. They had been arguing, apparently, as to which should have the bathroom first. Both had urgent dates with boys. But while the one had answered the door the other had darted into the bathroom and locked herself in.

"What d'you want?" snapped the girl at the door. She had, evidently, decided that I was to blame for her predicament. I handed her what I call my "Call Sheet" and suggested she might look at it later when she had a moment to spare.

She glanced at it. My picture was on the front, as was my name, in large type. Her highly developed knowledge of the film world came to my rescue. Obviously excited, she asked if I would give her my autograph, and went to get her album.

As she passed the bathroom door she crowed over her triumph to her sister, who was singing to herself. The singing broke off on a top note, and the songbird dashed out, only sketchily dressed, and began searching eagerly for her own autograph book. They asked so many questions about film stars that I imagine they were both very late for their dates.

A Bed For The Night

Everywhere I have found constituents most kind in offering to put me up for the night. In the country area especially there would be nowhere else to stay. Country and town folk both have prepared late meals for me, sharing with me their sparse rations, and in one place I discovered—too late—that they had given up their own bedroom and had a shakedown for the night with neighbours.

Talking late into the night, I have been able to learn some of the individual problems of the people I meet on such occasions. In order to help some of them I have started what is known as my "surgery." To it my constituents come on the first Friday of the month to consult me about their problems. These I take up direct with the Ministry concerned, or through someone who is already an M.P. and can raise it in the House.

In the work that remains to be done before the election I am helped by volunteers in every ward and district. They not only give unsparingly of their time, after a hard day's work, but also contribute such money as they can spare to augment the inadequate funds. And that's the spirit that has made standing for Parliament such a satisfying—as well as live and exciting—event in my life.

RUBEIGH JAMES MINNEY, who wrote this article, switched to film production after a long and varied career in journalism. Among films he produced were *Madonna of the Seven Moons* and *The Wicked Lady*. He has written novels, biographies and plays. He is fifty-four years old.

Schweppes DRY GINGER ALE
Schweppes SODA WATER
Schweppes INDIAN TONIC WATER
Who can think of Christmas
Schweppes GINGER BEER
without
Schweppes LEMONADE
thinking
Schweppes LIME
Schweppes
Schweppes LEMON
Schweppes
of
schweppervescence?
schweppervescence lasts the whole drink through

Make friends with Martell

MARTELL Cognac

THE BRANDY FOR EVERY HOME

THREE STAR CORDON BLEU

Waterman's

The gift that becomes a bond of friendship or affection

877 Taperite 61/1½

877 Taperite Pen and Pencil set 91/8½

575 — 48/11

515 — 36/8

Ball Pointer 12/10

All prices include tax

Obtainable from all Stationers Jewellers and Stores

Remember—"It's a Waterman's they want"

BRITISH MADE

Flight-deck party clears ice and snow from H.M.S. *Vengeance* during endurance trip in Arctic—which may become vital operational sphere

SCIENCE GOES TO SEA

Continued from page 9

problem still in their pending tray.

In their search for materials and designs to withstand any kind of blast, they learn a lot about the damaging effects of various weapons, and they pass on this information to the Director of Underwater Weapons whose principal job is to do to enemy ships what the Naval architects are trying to stop the enemy doing to ours.

The Director of Underwater Weapons has three special research units of his own: the Admiralty Mining Establishment, the Torpedo Experimental Establishment, and the Underwater Detection Establishment—names which are self-explanatory.

Research at A.M.E. covers both mining and minesweeping. "The primary task with mines," an expert explained, "is to develop types against which no ship can reasonably hope to immunize itself. For this, we have almost limitless permutations and combinations of the well-known characteristics of magnetic, acoustic and pressure mines, as well as"—and he smiled slyly—"a few new tricks we have thought up ourselves."

Postwar development of jet planes has produced a new problem in torpedoes. The normal torpedo of the future must be capable of being dropped from a very high-speed aircraft, and must travel much faster under water than was usual before.

The scientists are working on new ways of making sure the torpedo hits its target. Their research is following two main lines—development of target-seeking devices built into the torpedo itself, and of control devices by which the torpedo can be guided towards its target from the parent craft.

In 1945, the Germans had progressed much further on both these lines than we had. They were also a long way ahead of us in many aspects of submarine design.

Allied Combined Intelligence reported the capture early in 1945 of a completed U-boat which had obtained submerged speeds in excess of twenty-four knots. The Germans claimed that this submarine, fully equipped, could sustain a twenty-five-knot speed for six hours with underwater operative radius of 150 miles, but the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Hall, said recently that there is still, "to our knowledge, no submarine operational which can get a speed of twenty knots or over submerged."

The Germans also perfected "Schnorkel" (or, as we now call it, "snort") which enables submarines to operate for as long as forty days without surfacing. "Snort" is a tube-like device permitting air intake and exhaust discharge, which extends to the surface while the submarine hull is under water.

Russia's Submarines

Almost certainly, every important German development known to the British and Americans is also known to the Russians, and the Russians were so enraptured by German submarine design that they have concentrated most of their postwar Naval building programme on underwater craft.

Lord Hall, in a public speech on Trafalgar Day, gave the size of "one major Power's" submarine fleet as "some 280 or more." The R.N. has about sixty-five submarines, and the U.S.N. about 170, so he was fairly obviously referring to Russia.

Most of the Russian submarine fleet is in northern ports, and one of the Navy's first aims in any war against the Soviet would be to close what may be called "the Norway-Spitsbergen line" in an effort to prevent Russian submarines reaching the Atlantic.

This means that far northern waters would be an important operational sphere, and the Navy has concentrated much of its research in the past two years on investigating the effects of Arctic weather on men and equipment.

One man who can speak as feelingly on this subject as anyone is Australian-born, Surgeon-Commander E. Boyd Martin of the Naval Air Medical School, who sat on top of a gun spon-

son on the light fleet carrier *Vengeance* for three days and nights, in temperatures ranging from twenty-two degrees below to just above freezing point, and winds of up to eighty miles an hour, to see whether he could survive with the protection of only a standard Naval flyer's immersion suit. "Fortunately," he says, "it turned out that I could."

Martin lost half a stone and his taste for cigarettes during those seventy-two hours, but regained both, and a fortnight later was swimming among the ice floes to test another kind of suit. That time he lost the use of his hands for five days.

Ask him what he thought about while he was out on the gun sponson and he will tell you: "What a fool I was not to have got someone else to do the test," but just the same he will be doing a great many uncomfortable things this winter, including swimming in a Scottish loch.

Shut Into "Frig."

Another guinea-pig test to try out survival kits will start next year when two officers and ten ratings will be asked to volunteer for a trip which will take them from the Arctic to the equator; send them to sea in rowing boats and warships; and isolate them for varying periods in meat storage freezing chambers and jungle huts.

"We want to find out what is the minimum needed for survival in all kinds of climate," a Naval doctor explained. "Obviously in the tropics, where men sweat a lot, they need water. In the Arctic, it is just the reverse. They need food to keep warm.

"His Majesty's ships in wartime have a habit of proceeding from the tropics to the Arctic without notice, and they may be sunk anywhere on the way, so we must design a survival kit which will meet the needs of men in any climate, yet take up the smallest possible space. That is why we want to experiment with the same group of men in varying climatic conditions."

Part of their test will be done at Singapore, where the Royal Navy has the only tropical research station of its kind in the world. There, at the present time, ratings of the Far East fleet are taking part in an experiment which has them looking hour after hour at a clock face without figures, on which a hand moves around from space to space and occasionally skips two spaces instead of one. The rating who is watching is supposed to press a key whenever this happens.

The room in which he sits is kept heated at eighty-seven degrees, with uncomfortably high humidity, and the test is designed to show how long a man can be expected to keep his mind on a boring routine task in tropical conditions. In practice, the task might be scanning the horizon for enemy ships, or watching a radar screen for enemy planes.

The most elaborate series of guinea-pig tests since the war have been the "snort" submarine cruises done to find out how men reacted, physically and mentally, to being submerged for weeks on end.

The greatest physical danger with "snort" is the possibility of ruptured ear-drums. When the submarine's air tube is suddenly covered by water—which can easily happen—air pressure inside the submarine drops sharply. This produces the same effect on your ears as if you were in a plane which rose almost vertically to a height of several thousand feet.

If you know what is happening, you can adjust the pressure on your ears by swallowing, but in a submarine on a prolonged "snort" cruise, pressure changes occur when many of the off-duty watch are asleep. These men cannot take any conscious action to adjust themselves to the change.

In three experimental cruises, involving some hundreds of men and covering several months of submerged operations, the Navy solved this and other difficulties. The cruises ended without a single ruptured ear-drum, and with sufficient data on all aspects of "snort" operations to satisfy the Admiralty that it was on top of the problems.

Why Is It Draughty?

Most of these guinea-pig experiments have been carried out by the R.N. Physiological Research Committee which keeps in close touch with the Medical Research Council. Much of its work is on so-called "human engineering." It tries to find out the physical conditions (light, heat, ventilation, and so on) under which crews operate with maximum efficiency.

One thing which seems to upset sailors at sea almost as much as it does elderly spinsters in boarding houses on land is a draught. People have been complaining about draughts for centuries, but when the Navy got around to investigating it found that no one had ever invented a machine which could measure a draught in precise scientific terms.

Youthful Doctor J. E. Lovelock, of the Common Cold Research Unit, went to work on the problem and produced a piece of apparatus which can measure the most trifling air movements inside a closed room. The gadget looks rather like a piece of modern abstract sculpture, and uses radio-active polonium which gives off a constant stream of alpha particles. These are disturbed by any air movement, and the degree of disturbance can be measured electrically.

Although the Admiralty likes Naval scientists to be close-mouthed about their work, they are allowed to publish papers in recognized scientific journals when security is not involved.

Titles of some of their reports published in the past few years give the layman an idea of the scope of their work; "Ship stabilization"; "Water circulation and surface boundaries in oceans"; "The fouling of ships' bottoms"; "The electrical effects of tidal streams"; "Respiratory and other responses of human subjects during rapid decompression"; "Instantaneous presentation of infra-red spectra on a cathode ray screen."

The word "infra-red" is a clue to an important branch of pure scientific inquiry which a special group of the Admiralty Research Laboratory is carrying out for all three Services.

"Invisible" Searchlights

The Germans, who were well behind us in developing radar, concentrated on infra-red as a substitute and developed some highly interesting devices including searchlights with "invisible" beams which could be used to protect harbour entrances, and headlights which could give drivers continuous sight at night under conditions of complete blackout.

Of great potential value to the Navy is the possibility that infra-red can be used to maintain visual communication between ships in convoy at night. Wider dispersal will be the obvious convoy counter to the atom bomb, and maintaining contact between ships will be the big problem.

Radio and radar are also vitally important. The Navy has two research groups in this sphere—the Signal and Radar Establishment, and the Services Electronics Research Establishment. Altogether the Navy has four experimental establishments concentrating on what can be called "pure research," and eleven working on specific day-to-day problems.

They cost a lot of money, but only about one pound in every twenty-seven spent on the Navy. Without spending that one, perhaps the other twenty-six would be wasted. As it is, the First Lord was able to claim recently that Britain was "as advanced—in fact perhaps more so—as any other Naval power in all branches of scientific research on which we are engaged."

NEXT WEEK: In a final article on the State of the Navy, Ian Bevan tells the story behind "showing the flag"—the rôle of our ships and sailors as Britain's peacetime ambassadors.

Commander Boyd Martin on gun sponson where—as survival test—he sat for three days and nights in a temperature below freezing point

THIS WEEK'S COVER

IN the tiny village of Holmbury St. Mary (pop. 617) near Dorking, in Surrey, where he lives with his wife and one-year-old son, cover artist William Edward Narraway is known as the man who put the village on canvas. Most of the villagers have appeared in one or other of his paintings. This week's cover was the result of Narraway's laborious attempts to pluck a home-grown chicken. He decided to investigate how the local butcher tackled the job.

"For you, a sight for appetite! For birds a sight that harrows! The choicest fare that orchards bear has all been claimed by Farrow's. We watch, we wait, we speculate. Alas, for all our plans! The garden's pride goes right inside — not us, but Farrow's cans."

FARROW'S for choice

Canned English Fruits and Vegetables, Salad Cream, Tomato Ketchup and other good things from Orchard and Garden

America woos the housewife

by ROLAND WILD

The door salesman is an artist in America. Well dressed, slick with his flattery, he's irresistible to housewives

An American salesman. No, *not* selling—just an "opportunity to buy"

NEW YORK

EVERY MORNING, a hundred thousand alert, well-pressed American business men climb into their cars, shift gears along smooth highways to the suburbs, and cross neat lawns to press a doorbell. Inside, the chimes (sold on the instalment plan) intone pleasantly, and the housewife turns down the radio.

"Mrs. Jones," says the salesman. You have been selected by my company to receive a gift. You are under no obligation, but would it be more convenient for me to show you our magnificent, glamorous, easy-to-earn Atom washing-machine *now*, or perhaps later? I happened to be passing.

"*Now?* Thank you, Mrs. Jones. You are most gracious. . . ."

This is only one of the sales methods in the great American business creed, but it is the most interesting as a national trait. For there are several points to notice even in this brief introduction.

No Cause For Apology

Firstly, the salesman is prosperous, well dressed. He makes money. Secondly, he doesn't apologize for intrusion, for he expects Mrs. Jones to be grateful for the opportunity of inspecting the Atom washing-machine.

Thirdly, he never asks Mrs. Jones whether she wants to see the machine: he offers her two choices—now, or later. Fourthly, he is giving something away, and is therefore entitled to launch Mrs. Jones into the world of gracious living by ownership of the Atom.

The salesman is tops again in the American social scale. Every day, in hundreds of newspapers, there are advertisements for "salesmen and women anxious to earn" up to the dollar equivalent of £250 a month.

They are on twenty per cent commission only. They pay their own car expenses, pay for their own stationery, and are bonded to ensure correct representation of the company's goods.

Further, they rate high in the esteem of the community. They tell you that they are crusaders, that without themselves American industry would die.

So every customer is to them a problem, every sale is a triumph, and every failure something akin to sabotage of the nation's prosperity. Therefore they won't take "no" for an answer.

Instead, they say that if they get three "yeses," they have made a sale. They ask if Mrs. Jones doesn't find housework a drudgery? "Yes."

Would Mrs. Jones like to have all the mechanical aids in her house that were manufactured? "Yes." Doesn't Mrs. Jones think the Atom is prodigious? "Yes."

Mrs. Jones will soon pay a deposit.

Is the American public gullible, then? Can women be wheedled into buying what they don't want?

The answer is that the average housewife doesn't know she is seeing a work of art, a masterly piece of timing and showmanship. One artist, working for the past twenty years with a famous firm making sterling silver, showed me the tricks of the trade.

He dressed like a millionaire. He had been on the stage at one time. He took command of any house he entered.

From a small bag he produced an Irish linen napkin, switched on a light above his display, and, after a brief sales talk of flattery, produced with a gesture one single polished knife.

He held it in his left hand, under the light, and gazed at it admiringly. "Isn't it beautiful?" he said, smiling.

You would have said that this was the second time he had seen it. He didn't say he had been doing this for twenty years, three and four times a day, and that the company instructions to salesmen told him just how to hold the knife, when to smile, and how to pitch his voice in those exact words.

Knows All The Answers

He didn't say that every objection that came to the mind of the buyer had been answered in the company's instructions. He didn't say that when he asked whether the customer wanted the set with salad forks or without, he was going to take this as a definite order and start writing the contract.

At that moment he had made £2 10s. During that day, at the times found most propitious by the researeh bureaux, he would make five other calls and write three more orders, for a total of £10 a day in commission.

But more than that, he felt he was in a crusade, a holy battle against the strange unwillingness of the American housewife to spend above her income.

"Some of them say they have no money," he said. "I say to myself, if they have the money for the doctor or the grocer, they have it for me.

"Anyway, nobody knows what they really want or don't want. This is going to do them good, even if they don't know it."

Deceit is investigated by the Better Business Bureau of America, which has departments working throughout the year on allegations of fraud on the front doorstep. But the Bureau say that ninety per cent of the salesmen are honest, most of them offering a real reduction to the housewife, backed by substantial firms.

Sales and campaigns are based on nation-wide researches. As soon as American industry was re-geared for peace production, armies of college students and part-time workers were sent out to question householders.

What did they want? What did they think of instalment plans? How much could they put down a week for a television set, venetian blinds, washing-machines?

The manufacturers were presented with a colossal blueprint for sales. They discovered that of every three calls at a door there was one sale.

In one big firm, ten salesmen sold half a million dollars' worth of sterling silverware by smiling on the doorsteps, and getting three "yeses" in a telephone conversation. The top salesman earned £3,000 as his commission.

Of 5,000 students from an eastern university in their first five years after graduation, it was found that the salesmen made twice as much money as the doctors and lawyers, twenty per cent more than any salaried class.

But they never stopped working. They were working while they played golf, while they ate hurried meals at cafés where the waitresses might be starting a hope chest, at dinner parties in their own home.

One salesman was driving me out in his car to an appointment when he had a slight collision. He was a long time exchanging cards and the addresses of insurance companies.

When he came back he was smiling. "I sold him ten lessons on the violin for his little daughter," he said.

England may never see multi-coloured soap bubbles rising from a coffee stall in the glare of searchlights to rivet the eye, or smoke rings pouring from the mouth of a man in a cigarette poster, or funerals glamorized by high-pressure advertisements.

Honeyed Words

But when the customer is always right again, and the doorbell dandies and the princes of the psychological spiel drip their honeyed oratory into the ears of the housewife, then you will know it's a customer's world again, and it will be as well to remember Steve Manning, the great American salesman, and his opinion of the human race.

For Steve was invited to devise a method to sell more eggs in soft drinks. He studied the café counters carefully. Then he took a turn behind the bar. The first customer slid on to a stool and ordered milk shake.

"One egg or two?" Steve said.

He sold eggs.

Why should I care?

Switch off—why should I? I run a small shop and we live above it. We use no more electricity than we need — we certainly don't waste it ! So I can't see that Peak Hours and power cuts concern me. Let those who use lots of electricity do the switching off. If we have power cuts it won't be my fault — so why should I worry ?

Why ? because power cuts *do* concern you and everyone! They mean discomfort and inconvenience all round — and no one wants that. To avoid them we do not need to use *less* electricity. It is simply a matter of avoiding the Peak Hours from Monday to Friday. Use all the electricity you need — *off* Peak, and at week-ends.

THE PEAK— What it means

Power Stations have 'Peak' hours — just as buses and trains have 'rush' hours. They occur when, in addition to the essential needs of industry, the demand for electricity from homes, offices and shops becomes too heavy.

From Monday to Friday the usual Peak Hours are:

8.0 to 9.30 a.m. from October 1st to March 31st

and in addition:

4.0 to 5.30 p.m. from Nov. 1st to January 15th

During these times *the factories must come first.*

USE electricity-Off Peak!

British Electricity

JACK OF SWORDS

Continued from page 8

to whatever plunder I could lay my hands on; but may I burn in hell, I'd starve before I stole a hard-earned liquor from a poor devil of a foot-slogging grenadier. Excuse me if I seem to be a little outspoken, my dear Cazac, eh?"

Cazac said: "I'm not afraid of you, Ratapoil, or of that yard of steel you carry in your cane. Why? Because only armed men need to fear you. You are a fighter, not an assassin; and I am unarmed."

"Another lie," said Ratapoil. "When I took the liberty of embracing you in a brotherly way just now, I distinctly felt a pretty little pair of pistols in your side pockets. Oh Cazac, what a little rascal you are! You're so crooked that one can rely on you—you lie like clockwork. Now, once and for all: what are you after, and what did you give me that money for?"

"Because it will be necessary for you to be presented to certain great gentlemen, and the clothes you are wearing at present will hardly do."

"And what have you to do with gentlemen, Cazac?"

"Oh, I am a very low card in a very high game, my friend. I am, as you might say, one of the deuces that are played to gain a king."

CAZAC said this with peculiar emphasis, squeezing Ratapoil's sinewy arm. "Now listen to me seriously," he went on. "The other day I was asked if I could recommend, for certain desperately dangerous employment, a real man. This man would have to be a strong man of honour and unshakable integrity, it was understood; true as steel, keen, resourceful, cunning as a fox, but brave and resolute as a lion. Ambitious—a man who has his fortune to make, you understand. But true to his word—a man who would not break faith if one put his hand in the fire. And a good gambler—a man who would cheerfully stake everything, double or nothing, on one card—but a seasoned gambler, Ratapoil, and an honourable one. I thought of you at once."

"You were quite right, *pardieu*," said Ratapoil. "Especially about the gambling. It has kept me poor, damn it, because I always paid my debts of honour, with gold, steel or lead, according to the circumstances. I have even paid my tradesmen. That's why you see me with my shirt-tail hanging out of my breeches, as the saying goes. (The fact is, of course, I have no shirt.) But tell me, à propos of gambling, what I have to gamble with."

"The one stake you've always won back," said Cazac. "I mean, your life."

"Oh, *that*," said Ratapoil.

"You have staked your money and your reputation on the turn of a card, and lost. But whenever you have staked your life on the turn of a wrist, you have won. Isn't that so?"

"Oh, with a sword in my fist and a fair field I'll lay any fencing master in Europe three to one," said Ratapoil, "but there's luck needed in that game. I love nothing better than a good clean game of chance. A *clean* game I said, Cazac. What's your game?"

"Clean," said Cazac, "quite clean, but somewhat risky. As I told you, I am a low card, a sort of deuce. But if you want to play, you may be a Jack of Spades, Ratapoil."

"Why spades?"

"Oh come, come, Ratapoil! You have played cards in Spain, as elsewhere, surely?"

"I believe you! Cards in Spain! I lost sixty-five hundred at écarté after Saragossa, and—oh-oh, now I see what you mean! Trust you to talk in riddles! On the spade-cards the Spaniards always paint a sword. *Espada!* Jack of Spades, Jack of Swords—*I* see. But go on man, go on, for God's sake."

"Reinstatement in the army, Ratapoil? Promotion to the rank of Chief of Brigade at the very least, with a strong chance of immediate elevation to the rank of general; plus all kinds of money, honourably earned? Tell me what you think. Would you play for that?" asked Cazac.

"Who wouldn't? But tell me what you want me to do, me and *this*," said Ratapoil, striking his bamboo cane so that Cazac could hear the rattle of the concealed blade.

"Now that is not for me to say. If you agree to be a card in this game, you must be shuffled and dealt by the man at the head of the table. But, trusting to your honour, Ratapoil, I will tell you one thing in the strictest confidence. Among many other issues, this game involves the somewhat dangerous matter of getting a certain gentleman out of prison where he was thrown—unjustly, it goes without saying—by someone whose head you spat upon a few minutes ago."

"Who's the gentleman? Where is the prison?"

"I am sorry, I haven't the right to tell you any more," said Cazac.

Ratapoil said: "You spin a mystery as naturally as a spider spins a web, little man. You are too damned clever by half. Do you take me for a fool? If your great gentleman is in jail by order of Napoleon it must be for some political affair. This being the case I'll wager everything I have in my pocket that he is in the Prison of La Force. Eh? Will you bet?"

"You are a very astute man, my dear Ratapoil, but I am not going to tell you any more now. My superiors must tell you that. Get your clothes out of pawn, buy a good shirt and some decent boots and a tolerable hat . . . a cravat, gloves . . . you know. Go to a hairdresser, you understand, and make yourself beautiful, and meet *me* tomorrow evening at six o'clock in Switzer's restaurant. Then you will know everything."

"Very well," said Ratapoil, "but there's one little thing. You gave me ten Napoleons."

"They are yours to keep, in any case, whether you agree to play or not," said Cazac, magnanimously.

"Of course. But knowing you, little man, I am convinced that out of sheer force of habit you would hold back a good half of what you were instructed to pay me. I know the Commissariat," said Ratapoil, "I know the quartermasters, to my cost. You owe me another ten Napoleons. No arguments, no debates—give!"

"Good. I was testing you. Now I know that you are the right man for us; as shrewd as I suspected you to be," said Cazac, giving Ratapoil the ten Napoleons that remained in the purse.

POCKETING the gold, Ratapoil grunted: "That probably means that there were thirty or forty Napoleons. I know you. Let it rest. Tomorrow, six o'clock, Switzer's. I'll be there. Oh, before you go, one little word. I suppose you know what will happen to you if you play me any of your little tricks, my dear friend? . . . Remember, with me one plays fair and for keeps. You can cheat me once. Try it if you like, since you seem to have taken to dangerous games! Well, now I am going to have a beef steak and a bottle of Burgundy. Till tomorrow. Good night."

Ratapoil stepped out of the lamplight and walked, with the desperate intentness of a man on a forced march, to Theodore's gambling house in the rue Roberge.

He was in a strange mood, now; stunned and exalted, bewildered and excited.

You are turned upside down and

Coming in with the tray, Louise saw the pistols. She said: "Mon Dieu!"

round and round, and thoroughly mixed up, he said to himself. *Balance yourself and be cool, Ratapoil!*

He groped for the hard, cold part of himself, and found it, and applied it, like ice, to his hot head which was still somewhat muddled by malaria.

He reasoned: The Prison of La Force. Who is in the Prison of La Force? What great man? Whoever he is, who wants to get him out, and why? Whoever it is that employs Cazac, he must be a damned fool, or he'd know that Cazac would steal the pennies off his dead mother's eyes and have shirts made of her shroud, the son of a dog. Cazac is Judas Iscariot. . . . But why does he pick on me? Because he knows that there is to be work that requires good nerves and a strong wrist. There is money in it, evidently, if Cazac parted with twenty Napoleons without argument. Let us discount his smooth talk about reinstatement, and Chiefs of Brigade, and generals; put the money in our pocket and trust to this and that—Ratapoil slapped himself on the forehead with his left hand and brandished his swordstick with his right. "This and that," he said aloud, and went into Theodore's gambling house.

To the astonishment of the threadbare gamblers to left and right of him he made a neat rouleau of nineteen Napoleon and put the money on the red.

"Le jeu est fait!" cried the croupier. The marble chattered, rattled, clicked, and came still. The croupier pushed thirty-eight Napoleons over the cloth towards Ratapoil.

Normally he would have sat and played until his pocket was empty. But now he was in an extraordinary mood—a mood curiously compounded of resignation and exaltation. His skin tingled, yet it was numb. This he recognized as the feeling of luck: Ratapoil had felt like this once before in a game of vingt et un, when his last coin was on the table, and he had won a hundred louis in gold. Now he knew that he could not lose, whatever game he played.

He was no longer hungry or thirsty, and the only weight in the world was in his pocket—and this weight, when his footstep jolted it, made music. It may have been the hangover of the fever, or the intoxication of unexpected money: Ratapoil felt like a drunken man. He felt like a bubble full of tobacco smoke.

Suddenly something pricked him and he burst; and there he was on earth again: long, lean, bony, sinewy, broken major of infantry, Ratapoil himself. Someone had prodded him in the ribs with a walking-stick.

He turned at once, his moustaches bristling, six inches of blade already out of his cane. Then he stopped, stared, shouted: "Tessier, is it you or your ghost?"—and threw his arms around a small withered man with thin whiskers and a woebegone moustache. "What does this mean? Little Tessier! You're dead! What are you doing here? My little Tessier! They said you were killed in Spain. They said some damned Spaniard gave you a double handful of scrap iron in the tripes."

"As usual, comrade-in-arms, the reports were exaggerated. It is quite true that that confounded guerrilla let fly at me with an escopette. But, my dear Ratapoil, you know a blunderbuss—if you are more than five paces away your charge scatters itself to the four winds of heaven. That guerrilla must have rammed three-quarters of a pound of metal into the barrel. Mostly rusty nails by the way. Only three hit me. Have you the price of a bottle?"

"I have the price of anything you like, Tessier, old comrade! Because of all the men on earth that I wanted to meet alive in the world at this moment, you are that man."

"I put my last hundred sous on the black, Ratapoil, and I lost."

"I played on the red and won," said Ratapoil. "Let us eat and drink something, and talk. Lazarus risen from the dead! Tessier, the old fox, has come out of his hole in the ground! I want your opinion about one thing and another."

After they had eaten and drunk, they talked. "Tessier, I know I can trust you with my wife," said Ratapoil. "I know they didn't call you The Fox for nothing. Tell me, what do you make of all this?"

Soothed and warm with meat and wine, but always cautious, Tessier leaned forward, and putting the heels of his hands together made a kind of basket with his interlocked fingers.

He said: "About La Force, I believe that your guess is right. Your man in La Force Prison must be political or military, probably political. Take him all-in-all, he can't be of the first importance. If he were, he wouldn't be in La Force. He'd be elsewhere. You must know how the Little Man manages his affairs. Now use your head, Ratapoil, such as it is. You talk about 'Great Gentlemen,' and all that. What gentlemen are at present locked up there. I heard a rumour that General Malet——"

"It can't be Malet," said Ratapoil. "No one would spend twenty Napoleons to get Malet out of jail, surely? . . . Unless, perhaps, his family. . . ."

"He has only his wife," said Tessier.

"—Or it might be some other lady," Ratapoil suggested.

Tessier smiled and said: "Have you met the man? I have. You may take it from me, old friend; Malet is by no means an easy man to love. If I were a woman I would as soon wrap myself in a wet blanket, as embrace Malet. Oh no, rest assured; this is no love affair."

"Those who live longest will see most," said Ratapoil. "And as for your wet blanket, Tessier, old comrade in arms, I could tell you of occasions when, in a high fever, I would have exchanged all the amorous ladies of Naples for the embrace of one nice cold wet towel, and a glass of iced water. It depends upon the nature of the fever. In these matters you never can tell. But in case of emergency, Tessier, can I count on you? This is what I want to know."

"As always, absolutely, my dear Ratapoil. One little thing. . . ."

Tessier paused, somewhat embarrassed.

"Have ten Napoleons to be going on with," said Ratapoil, pressing the money into his friend's hand. "Until we meet, eh? Tomorrow I shall know where all this begins and ends."

They exchanged addresses, and parted.

Early next morning Ratapoil went to Myer's. Myer's shop reeked of impoverished gentility. It was full of the sloughed skins of peeled pomp. The swaying coat-tails that brushed your forehead when you walked up or down the avenues of hanging second-hand clothes fanned sad, stale perfumes into your face. Here, the silk-lined bottle-green coat of a broken heart-breaker gave out a whiff of violet; there a brocade waistcoat was odorous of opoponax and dust.

One corner of the shop was hung with weapons: here, dirt-cheap, you might buy a sabre or a rapier; a magnificently engraved inlaid fowling-piece; a pocket pistol no longer than your finger, or a horse pistol as long as your forearm.

There were also racks of boots and shoes and pumps, all partly worn: and God only knows what strange roads they had trodden!

Myer bought, sold, or loaned money on everything.

"Major Ratapoil! And what can I do for you today?" he said.

Putting down a greasy slip of stamped paper, Ratapoil said: "I want my clothes, man, particularly my blue coat with the silver-gilt buttons; and my English pistols. Hurry!"

The pawnbroker said. "Ah, Major Ratapoil, those pistols! I lent you two hundred francs on that pair of pistols, and there's six months' interest owing—all in all, four hundred francs; twenty Napoleons. Have you got it?"

"Out with them, out with them!" shouted Ratapoil.

"Look," said Myer. "Look, let's make a deal. Now on that pair of pistols you owe me twenty Napoleons. I'll give you another ten Napoleons and a brand new pair of pistols, and call it a deal. What do you say?"

"Give," said Ratapoil, pulling out a handful of gold.

He opened the flat mahogany case that Myer regretfully pushed towards him, and lifted out a pair of superb blue-barrelled pistols.

"Do you see the beauty of this pistol?" cried Ratapoil, balancing one of the weapons in his right hand. ". . . Look, I unscrew the barrel, shove my charge of powder into the breech; do you see? The bullet fits into this cup, the barrel screws back into place, and there we are. There is a bullet that *exactly* fits your barrel! . . . Will you bet me everything I have in my pocket that I can't hit a five franc piece at twenty-five paces?"

"Oh no," said Myer, hastily. Having made a neat bundle of Ratapoil's clothes he put it on the counter, took his money, and withdrew into the jungle of unhung and unassorted garments in the shop parlour where he ate and slept.

Ratapoil hurried home. He reached the sad, half-respectable house in the rue Larue at half-past nine, when his landlady was polishing the brass bell-knob. When she saw Ratapoil she clutched her brass-rag to her bosom and cried: "You, Major Ratapoil, out so early? I was just thinking of you."

"I'll lay you four and a half to one that I know what you were thinking about, Madame Laliberté," said Ratapoil.

"I was thinking: Major Ratapoil went out without his coffee."

"I would have wagered all I have in my pocket that you were saying to yourself: That worthless old soldier, when the devil is he going to pay me my rent? How can I get rid of this hanger-on of a Ratapoil?—that's what I thought you were thinking. Well, I lose my bet, thank God, you good, kind soul! Here are ten Napoleons on account."

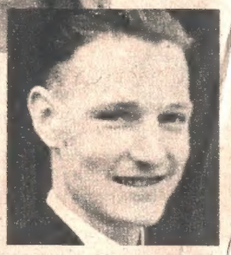
"Oh my God!" said Madame Laliberté. "What have you been up to now?"

Ratapoil gave her his parcel, saying: "Here you'll find some clothes that have been somewhat neglected for the past

They're Glad They Started

LAST summer each of these young readers took up a hobby, and now they've both won splendid first prizes. Entering a few simple words on a *Bullets* coupon brought £500 and a Christmas Turkey to twenty-four year old Miss L. A. Smith; completing a common-sense Crossword earned £100, a fowl and plum pudding for twenty-five year old Mr. M. McLaughlin. Why not make a start *yourself* with these fascinating competitions? Cash and food parcels are waiting to be won in Crosswords. Head this week's *Bullets* list and you'll win £500 and a New Year weekend in London for two!

"My parents took in my £500 telegram," said Miss L. A. Smith, 35 Grant Close, Liverpool. "They were stunned at the good news."



"That £100 message was the best wire I've ever handled," said electrician M. McLaughlin, 30 Prospect Pl., Ashton-on-Ribble, Preston.

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£50, £25—each plus

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Winners and chosen companions will be invited to JOHN BULL's New Year celebration party in London. Arrangements include conducted tour of London, trip to Windsor, seats for Olympia Circus and celebration lunch to meet Johnny Goodbullet, the *Bullets* bulldog. (Extra cheque if preferred to Weekend Award.)

2 of £10, 5 of £5, 10 of £2 10s. each plus NEW YEAR HAMPER

30 NEW YEAR HAMPERS

2,000 "Good Shot" Prizes

New Year Bonus—See coupon below

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit—the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee, enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests in *Bulletin* and *Gazette* dated Jan. 21 and in JOHN BULL dated Jan. 28, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

ADD 2, 3 or 4 WORDS to any of these "EXAMPLES"

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* on right. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

Along The 1950 Road	Landlord Sandy
Freedom's Fortress	Didn't Try
Bigger Man	Mid-week Football
Keep Your Chin Up And	A Catastrophe
Progressing	Convinced
Customer Sam	The Villagers
In The World Of Science	Beauty And The Beast
Home To Her	**Incomplete "Examples"—see instructions**
Made All The Difference	Industry's.....
Groundnuts	The.....Of Life
The Day Will Come When	Wondering If It's.....
Sorely Needed	Must Have....., But
Burnt His Fingers	Nothing To.....
	In The.....Department

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XWORD 659 RESULT

WINNING WORDS. ACROSS: 1, Simple. 5, Stall. 6, Chucked. 8, Rook. 12, Taker. 13, Talk. 14, Best. DOWN: 1, Shack. 2, Peace. 3, Fat. 4, Blot. 7, Doze. 9, York. 10, Spirt or Spurt. 11, Role or Rule.

NINE £100 SHARERS: Mrs. E. Cook, Hull; S. Day, Kings Norton; Mrs. J. Dickinson, Barnsley; J. G. Griffiths, Newcastle Emlyn; A. W. Hoar, Whitefield; D. J. MacRae, Edinburgh, 3; P. J. Pinfield, Tettenhall; Miss I. Richards, Yardley; E. Sanderson, East Boldon.

Awards value £25 for 1st Runners-up shared by 92 entrants. Useful "Signpost" Prizes awarded to 2nd Runners-up. In addition, Winners and 1st Runners-up receive Double Christmas Feasts.

"Bullets" Winners 1,707

FIRST PRIZE, £500 plus Christmas Turkey: Major A. Bayley, 44 Camrose Road, Ely, Cardiff.

THE GOVERNMENT'S HAND DON'T FORCE, UNIONS—*Reinforce*!

SECOND PRIZE, £50 plus Christmas Turkey: N. Cropper, 49 Ashridge Street, Runcorn: A HUNDRED YEARS HENCE—EVERYTHING "FREE"—*Anybody* FREE?

THIRD PRIZE, £25 plus Christmas Turkey: J. T. Clements, 73 Kilmartin Avenue, Norbury, S.W.16: INTO BATTLE—GERM? INTO BED, "FIGHTER"!

OTHER AWARDS. £20: S. Morgan, 100 Kimberley Road, Roath, Cardiff: READY FOR INDUSTRY—OR WAR'S HELL, HARWELL? £15: E. F. Legg, Norcott Villa, Bagot, Jersey, C.I.: READY FOR WINNING — CURATE, AUNTIE'S "SPECIAL PERM"! £10: E. B. Gracie, River Street, Brydekirk, Annan: NURSING — ATOM, DOUBTLESS CROONING, STALIN. £9: W. Wallis, 2 The Crescent, Croxley Green, Herts: THE GOVERNMENT'S WATCHING—THAT MID-WEEK FOOTBALL, TOO. £8: Mrs. V. Jenkinson, 7 South Street, Morton, Nr. Bingley: INTO BATTLE—INTO CIVVIES—INTO *This*! £7: A. Lad, Duffryn Junior School, Mountain Ash: WE MUST SAVE—*Peace* "MACHINERY" FROM "DISMANTLING." £6: Mrs. J. T. Drew, 75 George Street, Summertown, Oxford: A WOODEN SOLDIER — HOLDING VITAL "TRENCH." PIT-PROP.

Above 7 winners each also receives Christmas Turkey.

For 5 winners of £5 plus Turkey, and 5 of £2 10s. plus Turkey, see last week's "*Bullets*" *Bulletin*.

Winners of 25 further Turkeys and 100 Fowls have been notified and 2,000 "Good Shots" posted.

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THIS WAY TO WIN

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues on right. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one, two or three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

Across Clues **XWORD 664**

1. It is hoped that they will solve the dollar problem in time
6. Motorists find them rather more expensive these days
9. It takes quite a bit of money to run several of these
11. Nation's well-being can be improved by quality of this
13. Some hubbies find themselves forced to part with
14. Since the war, there have been big shocks for people living in this

Down Clues

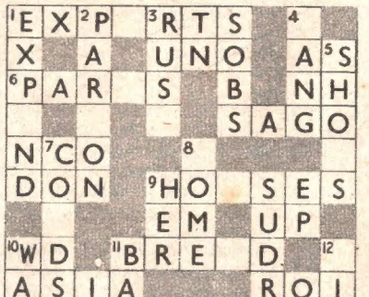
1. Small business man often finds he has little money to
2. There are times when one has to beg
3. Protecting cover may be good enough to withstand this
4. It's a bit risky when one gets loose
5. Some do well even in really bad weather
7. Singers, in particular, should nurse them
8. Can be a surprisingly disappointing building
10. Selfish, unscrupulous people find it easier to make this
12. Is an incalculable asset to theatre

£100 AND FOOD PARCELS FOR THIS XWORD

In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.), Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.), and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.). Use ink, not pencil.

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps, covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated January 14.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature below is agreement to Rules.



CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d.
No.		1s.
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(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

I enclose P.O. value.....

No. .....

Signed .....

Address.....

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664 Closing Postmark MON., JAN 2

JACK OF SWORDS

Continued from previous page

few months. Will you, or your charming niece, put them in order for me? Above all, there is a blue coat with silver-gilt buttons. This, in particular, must be immaculate. The waistcoat, the trousers, and the shirts also. As for the boots, think of them like this: if I break my mirror and want to shave myself, these boots must serve me as a mirror. Also, I want a simple meal—a sole and a capon, a bottle of wine, something of that sort—in my room. I have urgent business. Everything is to be done immediately, Madame Laliberté."

"Immediately, Major, immediately!"

In his room, sitting on his bed, Ratapoil examined his pistols, his beautiful English pistols. He sat for many minutes, simply admiring them. He had oiled them heavily before he pawned them. Now he cleaned the plate of the lock, dried and re-oiled the tumbler screw, the battery screw, the bridle screw, and the hinge of the pan-cover.

At last he loaded the pistols, measuring the powder like an apothecary.

His capon was roasted before his pistols were ready for use.

MADAME LALIBERTÉ'S niece, coming in with the tray, said: "Oh, mon Dieu!" when she saw him lowering the hammers of his loaded pistols.

"What's the matter with you, Louise?"

She put the tray on the table, and her hands shook so that the glass tinkled against the bottle, as she said: "I thought you were going to kill yourself."

"What, me? It would take a better man than me to kill Ratapoil, by God! And what difference could it make to you if I did, Louise?"

"None at all. Go on, shoot yourself. But first of all eat your capon and drink your wine, won't you? Oh, and by the way, your suit and your boots are ready now, and your shirt will be ready in two hours."

"Here, Louise," said Ratapoil, holding out a gold Napoleon, "buy——"

Louise struck the coin out of his hand and went out, slamming the door.

"Now what is the matter with her?" said Ratapoil, picking up the Napoleon.

He ate his capon and drank his wine, rested a little, and later put on his clothes. His linen was exquisitely laundered. Although he had grown a little thinner since Larousse had cut his clothes, the coat still hung well on his bony frame; and he really might, at a pinch, have used his boots as shaving mirrors.

Ratapoil put one pistol into the breast-pocket by his right armpit, and the other into the lefthand side-pocket of his coat. Then, banging on his hat and taking hold of his sword-stick, he felt really dressed.

"Now, let us get to the bottom of this affair," he said, and went to meet Cazac and his mysterious master.

To be continued next week

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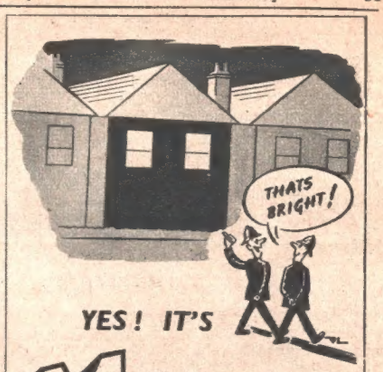

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FOR CHRISTMAS

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G P O

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Give Toni this Christmas

WHICH TWIN HAS THE TONI— and which has the expensive perm?

(see answer below)

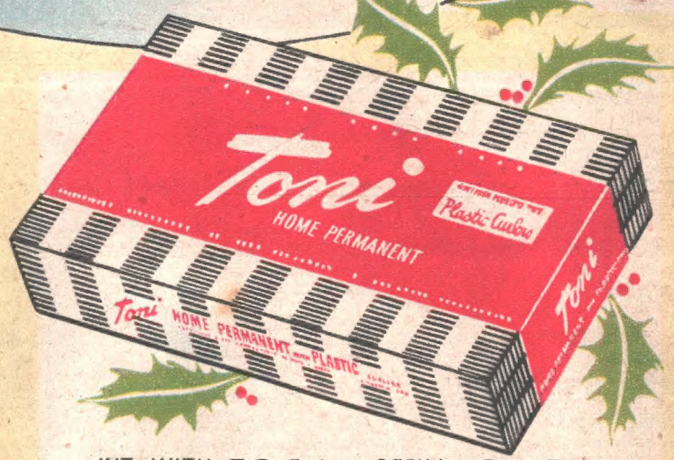
What more acceptable Christmas gift can there be for any woman than a Toni Home Permanent Kit? She will be charmed with this present, for Toni gives soft, graceful curls that look natural from the very first day.

Toni waves any kind of hair that will take a perm — including grey, dyed or baby-fine hair — and is so easy to do *at home*.

And remember that millions of regular Toni users throughout the world have *proved* that a Toni looks as lovely and lasts as long as the most expensive perm.

Buy her a Toni Home Permanent Kit — it's the ideal Christmas gift. If she's already a Toni user, why not give her a Refill?

Which Twin has the Toni? Ella and Lila Wigren are identical twins. Ella, on the right, has the Toni. She says: "My Toni looks so natural that Lila says her next perm will definitely be a Toni, too!"



KIT WITH CURLERS **12/6** REFILL KIT **8/4**

(Prices Incl. Tax)

Give ~~yourself~~ "her" a lovely Toni —used by 25 million American women!

A PRODUCT OF THE TONI DIVISION OF GILLETTE, ISLEWORTH, MIDDLESEX